A Complete Fantasy Adventure Game Magazine

PROTEUS

No.16

95p

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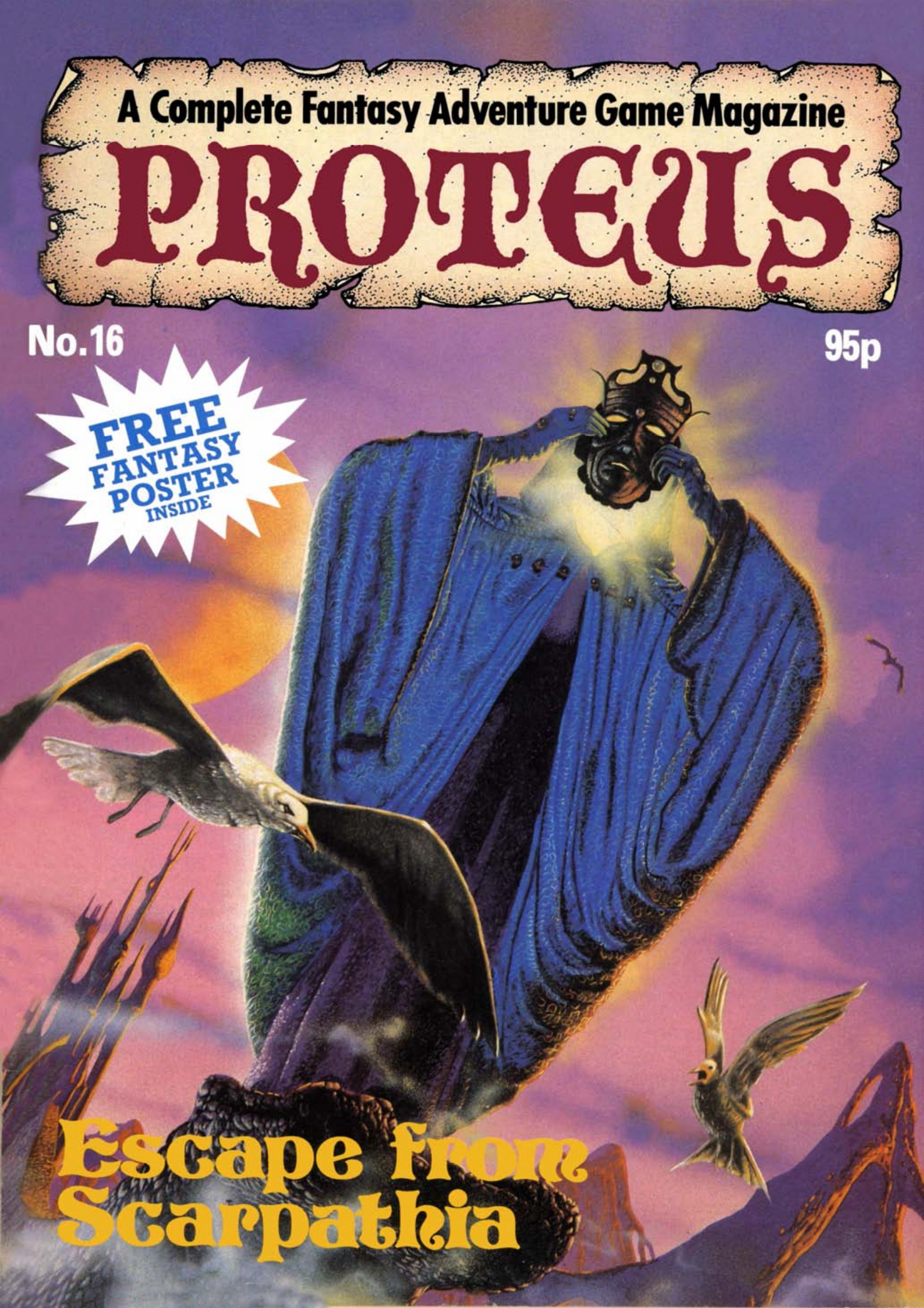

Escape from Scarpathia

Exclusive
PROTEUS SWEATSHIRT
– SEE BACK PAGE

PROTEUS No. 16

Escape from Scarpathia

by David Brunskill

DICE and a pencil are all you need to begin this adventure – then *you* decide which route to take, which dangers to brave.

As you progress in your Quest, you are likely to encounter various traps, or face monsters. You will also get information, or find certain items which will be of help to you in your quest. You should record these in your *quest sheet* as well as keeping an account of how many rations you have left. As you use up rations, remember to cross them off in your *quest sheet*.

It is important that you build up a map of the way. You may not succeed at your first attempt, but each new journey will give you more information – until you are at last successful in your quest.

If you try to read the magazine in numerical order, it will make no sense. You must choose, when you are given the choice, which section to turn to, and which traps, puzzles, or monsters to face. Good luck!

NO. 17.

Your adventure in No. 17 will be Black Crag Castle. A mind bending puzzle by Ken Bulmer. This one should keep you interested for many an hour.

The poster (shown above) will be by Julek Heller.

No. 17 ON SALE FRIDAY FEBRUARY 19, 1988.

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Introduction

You are about to enter a strange and fantastic world of long ago. Weird creatures, mysteries, dangers and magic abound. As an adventurer of some experience, you are strong, wise, courageous and agile. You will need all of these qualities if you are to succeed in your next quest. You may also need a little luck!

Before you begin the quest take two dice, a pencil and a few sheets of paper on which to map your progress. As you will have to fight many battles along the way, you must first determine your level of dexterity and strength.

Dexterity and Strength

Roll one dice, add six to this number and make a note of it. This is your *Dexterity* score and shows your skill in swordsmanship.

Now roll two dice, add twelve to this number and make a note of it. This is your *Strength* score.

These scores will alter as you go along. You may, for instance, lose strength points in battle. You may restore your strength by eating a meal. One meal restores five strength points. You must remember though, that *your Strength and Dexterity Scores must never exceed their initial value determined by the throw of the dice at the beginning of each adventure.*

Rules for Fighting

On the way you will meet people and creatures you may choose or be forced to fight. Each will have its own Dexterity and Strength scores given in the text.

To resolve a battle:

1. Roll two dice and add this to you opponents Dexterity Score. This is its *Fighting Power*.

2. Roll two dice and add this to your Dexterity Score. This is your *Fighting Power*.

3. If your Fighting Power is greater, you have scored a blow and wounded your opponent. Subtract two points from its Strength Score. If your opponent's Fighting Power is greater, it has wounded you. Subtract two points from your current Strength Score. If both scores are the same, you have parried each other's blows. Neither loses points.

The next round of battle proceeds in exactly the same way. Repeat steps 1, 2, and 3 until either your score or your opponent's is zero. A zero means death.

Losing and Gaining Points

Sometimes you will be awarded extra points during the adventure. Add these to your score but remember **you can never exceed the initial value set at the beginning of the adventure**. You may also lose points due to some difficult activity. Simply deduct these from your current score.

Replenishing Strength

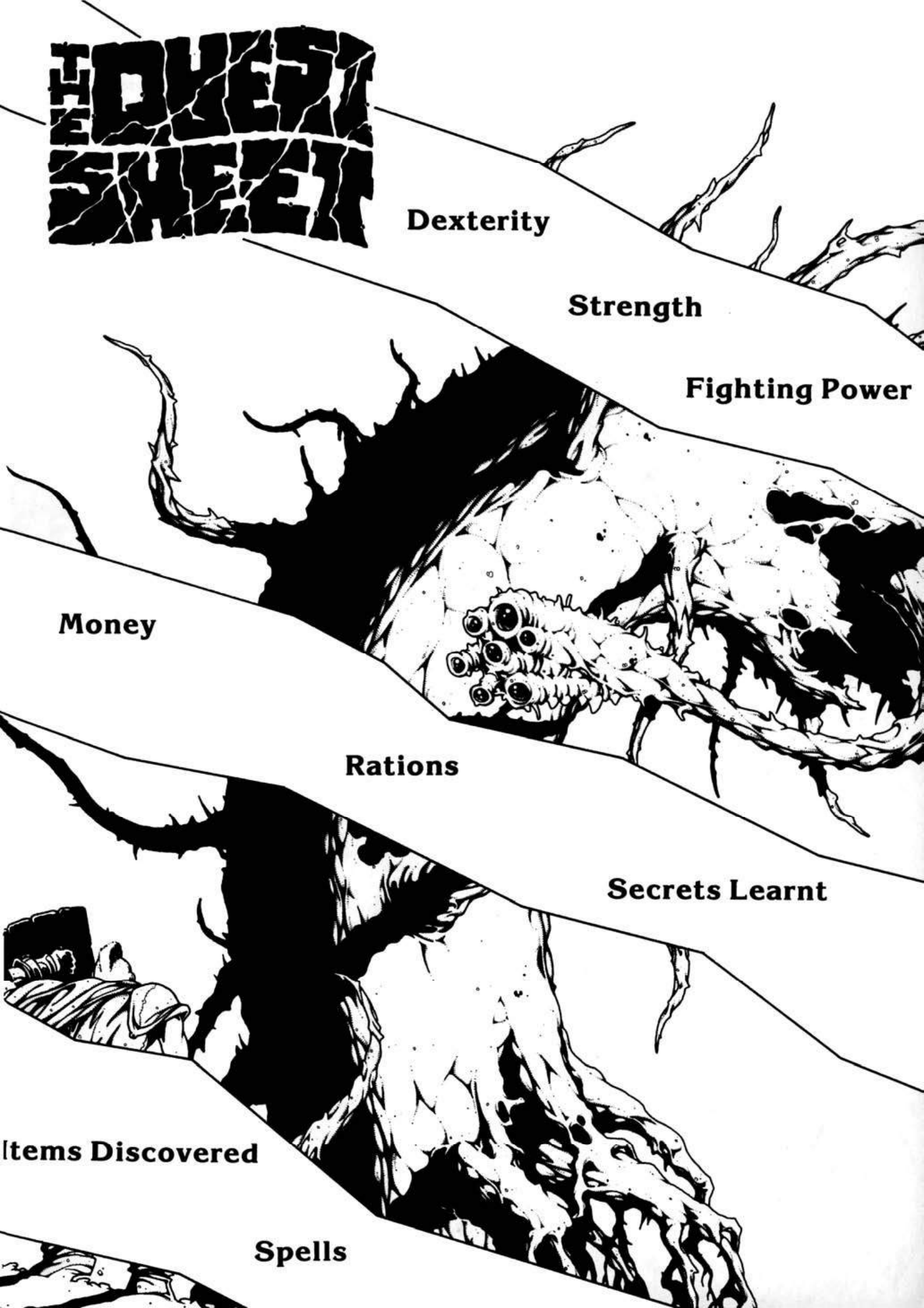
As you read on you will discover what weapons, additional equipment, money and rations you may take on your journey. There will be sufficient food for a set number of meals. Make a note of each meal you eat, each piece of gold you spend and each object you find. Use your rations, money and equipment wisely. You have a long and difficult road ahead.

Your Quest Begins...

A thin light filters through the trees as you cut your way East through the dense jungle foliage. Strange, multi-coloured birds dart glinting through the tangled branches and creepers, and sudden harsh cries pierce the still, humid air. Continuing in this manner as the sun climbs higher in the sky, and the oppressive heat becomes more strength-sapping, you are unprepared for the broad, flat clearing that you abruptly stumble into.

Drawing breath, as the sweat pours down you, you gaze at the sight before you in amazement: a marble-pillared temple soars towards the bright blue sky, its elaborate stonework decorated with gold leaf and flashing jewels. A broad marble stairway leads up to a golden door, flanked by statues of panthers carved, it seems, from pure jade. Even as you begin to take in this awe-inspiring and totally unexpected sight, the golden door swings silently open, and a figure emerges. Dressed in a pure white tunic across which is a scarlet sash, the figure regards you from on high, his features shadowed by the head-dress he wears—the head and mane of a lion, though the gold leaf that adorns it glows in the bright sun as the figure slowly descends the steps, the lion's sightless eyes flashing like two pure diamonds.

The imposing figure reaches the bottom of the broad stairway, and walks a few yards across the clearing towards you; he stops to look at you more closely, and you suddenly feel ill-at-ease in your battle-scarred leather armour, aware that you are grimy and sweating from your exertions. But the man's face is expressionless, as he looks at you carefully, his eyes black as night in his young, tanned face. You become aware, as you avert your gaze with an effort from his penetrating stare, that others have now followed him through the door of the temple: dressed similarly, though with no head-dresses, they stand at intervals on the broad staircase, silent, watching you. With a start, you realise that your sword is still in your hand, and you hastily sheathe it. None of the people facing you is armed, and they are not openly hostile. Gathering your senses, you introduce yourself, explaining that you are an adventurer, one who undertakes the most dangerous of quests in return for glory or reward. The man's face softens, and he gives a slight smile: "We have no need of


THE QUEST SHEET
Dexterity
Strength
Fighting Power
Money
Rations
Secrets Learnt
Items Discovered
Spells

such a warrior," he says. "We are a peaceable people, but are able to defend ourselves well enough. Come," he adds, his arm outstretched towards the temple, "rest, bathe and eat before you continue on your travels."

Although wary, your instinct tells you that these people mean you no harm, and, after a moment's thought, you follow the tall man, who is already striding up the steps. The others lining the stairway look at you with only slight curiosity as you ascend and pass through the golden door, and walk down an airy, marble-floored corridor and into a sumptuously-furnished room. Soft, deep couches are arranged against the walls, and torches in stained-glass holders cast a soft glow. A low table is set with bowls of fruit, and plates of meat and bread line another long table. The man sinks into a couch, and, removing his lion's head-dress, pours two goblets of wine. As you take one, he speaks again: "I am Iquitos, and this is Alesso, my city. My people have lived here longer than time, building our civilization, and wishing no contact with the outside world. You are the first outsider I have met, though my father told me of travellers who chanced to pass this way. We will give you rest and shelter for only a short time, and then you must leave. But I would warn you: there is one called Margas, whose people roam these parts. They are warlike and cruel, and you would do well to stay clear of them. Move silently and swiftly, along the track that leads North from here; it will be seven days and nights before you are safe."

You have time to ponder on what you have been told as you rest for a while before eating that evening with Iquitos and his family; but though you dine well, you learn little more—the people are polite and friendly enough, but defensive and reserved. You get the impression that they will be relieved when you leave.

Before you turn in for the night, you share a final flask of wine with Iquitos, and ask for more information about

Margas and his people. Iquitos grimaces, as though the subject were distasteful to him: "Margas claims sovereignty over the people of the East," he says. "His castle towers above that rocky land, but the Scarpathians are an undisciplined rabble, loyal to the one who pays highest, or who instils most fear. Margas has ambitions, and gold in his coffers, but he lacks the skill to lead the people effectively. He once trained to be a Sorcerer, but was able to learn little of that art—not enough to trouble us. If the powers of sorcery were allied to his ambition and strength, then that would be a different matter; however, as it is…" Iquitos shakes his head, frowning. "They are an occasional nuisance to us, but that is all. I would repeat my advice of earlier: if you are wise, you will avoid Scarpathia when you leave here." You nod gravely, but already other thoughts are tumbling through your mind—an ambitious warrior-king with gold in his coffers, troublesome to others…surely there would be others, if not Iquitos, who would pay well to be rid of such a nuisance… But you keep these thoughts to yourself as Iquitos rises to leave, his fine features shadowed above you as he solemnly wishes you pleasant dreams.

When at last you sleep, it is deep and untroubled; and by mid-morning you are on your way again, waving farewell to Iquitos and his people. In your backpack are fresh water and provisions, enough for five meals. Your leather armour has been cleaned and patched, your sword-blade honed to an edge that flashes in the bright sunlight as you take the path North out of the clearing and back into the tangle of branches, vines and creepers.

Now read on....

1

The path plunges back into the humid half-darkness of the dense forest, but the path is quite straight, and you have to cut away only the odd trailing branch or overhanging vine. Moving quickly, you quite soon come across a path to the East, and stop. You think about your conversations with Iquitos—if you carry on North, you should be safe; however… Almost without knowing it, you have made a decision and find yourself walking along the track East, in search of Margas and castle Scarpathia. You smile wryly as you cut your way East—you could never resist a challenge. However, after a short distance, the way further is completely blocked by the dense foliage, though a poor path runs both North and South. You consider what to do now. Will you go:

North? Turn to **15**.
South? Turn to **194**.

2

You pause outside the door and listen again; you recognise the unpleasant gurgling and giggling sounds coming from beyond the door—it sounds exactly like a small party of Goblin Guards getting noisily drunk. You draw your sword, then kick open the door and charge in; with surprise on your side, you cut down the first Goblin quickly, though the other two get less than steadily to their feet, knocking bottles and goblets everywhere, and draw their short swords. In their present state, the Goblins are no match for you, and one hangs back, squirming away, as you attack the other. Fight them one at a time:

	Dexterity	***Strength***
FIRST GOBLIN:	7	6
SECOND GOBLIN:	5	6

If you kill them both, turn to **106**.

3

The sound of clashing swords echoes along the corridors as you turn from the dead guard, and you see that Finn is getting the worst of his fight. One arm hangs limp, and even as you move to help him, he takes a thrust through the chest, and falls to the floor. It takes just two good blows with your own blade to dispatch the Guard, and then you turn to Finn: but he is breathing his last. Blood bubbles at his lips as he gasps, "Good luck, stranger", and then his head drops.

You lower him gently back down: there is nothing you can do for poor Finn now, and you again consider which way to go. Will you go:

North? Turn to **136**.
South? Turn to **56**.
East? Turn to **193**.

4

Some way further down this long Southward passage, you stop again: there is a door set into the wall on your left. You listen, but can hear nothing. Will you:

Try to open the door to investigate? Turn to **124**.
Continue South? Turn to **76**.

5

You wait anxiously, as the two conspirators glare at you, and tell Margas the password. At length, they seem to relent, and both turn back to their charts, dismissing you. You move as fast as you can towards the door in the South wall—turn to **49**.

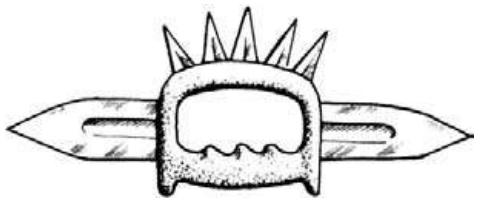
6

Back at the four-way junction, you reconsider: the jail is ahead of you, and you feel that you had better get clear quickly before more guards turn up. Will you go:

North? Turn to **136**.
South? Turn to **56**.

7

You hand the document to the captain, who spends some time reading it, and turning it over in his hands, while your stomach churns. At length he says, "Very well, open the gate!" Turn to **200**.



8

You head back West and under the archway again. Clare glowers at you without speaking as you scamper awkwardly across her little room to the archway in the West wall. As you duck under it, you hear her parting shot: "If I see you again, my dear, I'll turn you into a slug!" You hasten Westwards—turn to **33**.

9

There is a tingling sensation in your bones as soon as you lift the sword; you have the sensation of lightness, and great power, and indeed the sword swings easily through the air when you try it. It is an enchanted weapon, and you may add two points to your Fighting Power when using it in any future battles. If you now wish to try on the crown, turn to **157**. If you wish to take the sceptre, turn to **127**. If you would rather leave now, turn to **182**.

10

There is a door in the opposite wall, and you try it; but it is locked fast, and there is no way you can see to open it. A few blows with your sword reverberate around the room, but leave the surface almost unmarked. Desperately, you turn back to the door through which you entered, but that too is locked fast. You search for a hidden exit, but in vain… You are trapped in the depths of castle Scarpathia, until you starve to death, or Margas' wandering Guards find you. Your quest is over.

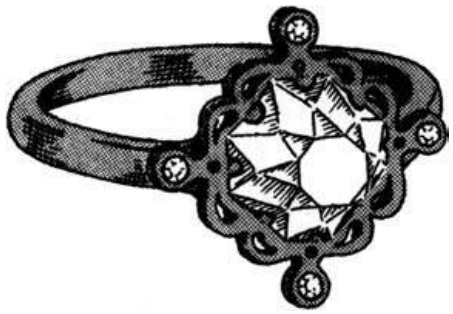
11

The way East turns to the South again after a short distance, and you go South until you reach a door set into the wall on your right. Will you:

Open the door?	Turn to **187**.
Ignore it, and continue South?	Turn to **181**.

12

There is a long silence when you have finished speaking, and then the Troglodytes huddle together, chattering. At length, the one who first addressed you speaks again: "We do not see why we should help you," he squeaks, "but in any case, you will never escape without authorisation from Margas." This news severely dents your confidence; should you meet Margas, you somehow doubt that he will authorise you to escape. "However," continues the Troglodyte, "we have a forger among us whose work is excellent. He is willing to forge a permit for you—which may fool the guards—but at a price. He will not do this for less than twenty pieces of gold, or some piece of jewellery of equivalent or greater value." If you have at least twenty gold pieces, a diamond ring or a jewelled sceptre, and wish to risk paying the forger, turn to **78**. If you cannot, or prefer not to pay, you have little choice but to go back to the raft and hope for better things elsewhere—turn to **100**.



13

Swimming powerfully, you manage to keep your head above water, and the river widens and calms, as you are carried South-West. You are swept towards the East side, where there is a wide bank of shingle. A few strokes more and you reach the bank and haul yourself up onto the shore, water pouring from you. Above, rising almost sheer, is a cliff-face, in which are a number of cave entrances. Turn to **154**.

14

You lift out the sceptre: it is of pure gold, and set with fine jewels. There is an odd rattling noise as you take it out, however, and you give the sceptre a shake: there is something rattling around inside the globe. You soon discover that the globe comes apart, and find inside a key, with the number, '17' inscribed in it. Putting the top back on the globe, you push the sceptre into your belt and pocket the key. Will you now:

Try the sword?	Turn to **55**.
Look for an exit?	Turn to **182**.

15

The path winds North through the trees, which begin to thin a little, as the ground rises. Soon the track turns East again, and you 'follow it until you are climbing up into the low foothills of higher, rocky ground. A little further, you notice a crumbling path off to your left, obviously little-used. Will you now:

Take the path North?	Turn to **41**.
Continue East?	Turn to **122**.

16

Cautiously, you try the keys in the other cupboard until one works—but there is no booby-trap, and you look inside. You discover more weapons of various kinds, and carry on looking; moments later you are delighted to find your backpack stuffed in amongst rubbish at the back—but, to your disappointment, it is empty. You turn back to the door—turn to **107**.

17

Some way down this corridor, you pass a way to the left. You stop and look down the passage—it is quite short, and there is a door at its end. Beyond the door, you can make out, faintly, giggling and shrieking noises. Will you:

Go North, to investigate?	Turn to **2**.
Continue East?	Turn to **42**.

18

In one fluid movement, you leap at the Dwarf and cut him down—the bell goes clattering across the stone floor! You freeze for a second, looking wildly all round, but no guards come rushing in. Nevertheless, you feel that you had better get out quickly, and dart under the archway—turn to **43**.

19

You go North until you reach the turning, and then follow the tunnel round to the East. The floor slopes down quite steeply, and faintly, you can hear running water ahead; you continue until the tunnel widens out and stops a few feet above an underground river. You consider what to do next—the water is deep, and quite fast-flowing, and there is no obvious way across it. But as you stand there thinking, you receive a sudden hard push between the shoulder-blades, and hear laughter echoing as you drop into the water. Weighed down by your equipment, you sink at once, and the current starts to take you South-West, downstream. Your chances are not good. If you have the spell Breathe, turn to **133**. If you do not have the spell, turn to **144**.

20

Gasping you manage to croak out the words of the spell, and at once are able to breathe freely. Greatly relieved, you grab the key, though you are unable to read what is written on it, as your eyes are streaming and your skin feels afire. Lose two Strength points. You dart outside and slam the door, leaning against it until you have recovered. When you feel fit again, you look closely at the key: it is inscribed with the number, '33'. You pocket the key and continue South—turn to **181**.

21

As you listen to the murmuring voices, you push open the door a little, to enable you to see. You can just make out two men leaning over a table on which are charts, maps and drawing instruments. One of the men towers above the other, a huge barbarian, while the smaller man is dressed in the elaborate flowing robes and wide-brimmed hat of a sorcerer. The barbarian is speaking: "So, Volth, it seems we have it; your magical spells allied to my strength and leadership will enable us to enslave all the lands for as far as the eagle flies!"

"Indeed Margas," replies the sorcerer, "together we shall be invincible! But wait -" He holds up his hand for silence —"I sense an intruder!"

As Volth speaks, he turns until he is facing the door behind which you cower. An invisible hand grabs you by the neck and drags you, protesting, into the room. "Hah! What is this?" cries Margas, striding towards you; a great sweating giant of a man, he is fully twice your size, and looms over you like some evil colossus. Volth is glaring at you with equal hatred, and you desperately try to think of something to say or do. You could try magic immediately, if you have it—turn to **52**. Or you could say that you are a mercenary, looking for work—turn to **141**; or you could draw your sword at once and attack Margas—turn to **169**.

22

A tunnel leads East, giving off a blue light, and you follow it a short way until you have to stop: there is a large hole ahead of you, some thirty feet wide, plunging into darkness. There is only one way you are going to be able to cross this gap: if you are wearing a pair of winged sandals, turn to **54**. If not, you can wait here until you are found, or return and be turned into a slug! In either case, your quest is over.

23

Ducking under the archway, you see that a tunnel leads East, cut into solid rock. However, only a short distance down, you have to stop: the floor of the passage has given way completely, and a gap of some thirty feet opens in front of you. Picking up a pebble from the ground, you toss it into the hole: it is a long time before the echoes begin to reverberate faintly back. If you are wearing a pair of winged sandals, you could try to cross this gap—if you wish to risk this, turn to **54**. If you do not, or if you are not wearing the sandals, you will have to return—turn to **8**.

24

Clare snatches the ring from your reluctant fingers and treats you to a gap-toothed grin. "Thank you, my dear," she leers, gazing at the jewel, "now what have we here? Ah yes… water…and fire, you have passed through fire…there is danger ahead, much danger—you will need two keys…" Abruptly she looks up at you: "That's it," she snaps, "now get out!"

She is still clutching the ring tightly, and, outraged by her performance, your hand moves instinctively to your sword—but something in her bright unswerving gaze deters you, and you think better of it. You see that there are archways to both left and right, adorned by the multicoloured drapes. Clare gives no hint which way you should go, and so you slowly move round her first to the right, and then the left exit. "Out there!" she suddenly snarls, indicating the exit in the West wall. "The other way leads to death, you fool!" What will you do now? To leave via the archway in the West wall, turn to **163**. To go out under the archway in the East wall, turn to **23**.

25

If you are choking or drowning, this spell will enable you to magically breathe until the danger is past. Turn to **146**.

26

The door at the end of the passage opens easily enough, and you enter a small, square room. Empty crates and boxes litter the floor, and there are some earthenware jugs. Examining the debris more carefully, you find that some of the jugs have liquid in. You are extremely thirsty after your recent ordeals; if you wish to drink some of the liquid, turn to **184**. If you would rather leave it, and leave through an archway in the North wall, turn to **84**.

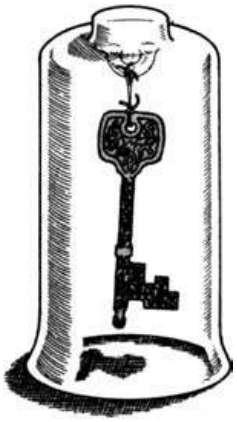
27

You wade in, and then launch yourself into a dive: but you are quite unprepared for the strong underwater current that suddenly catches you, dragging you under and sweeping you downstream. If you have the spell Breathe, turn to **81**. If not, turn to **144**

28

Looking cautiously in, you see a small bare room with a stone-flagged floor, quite bare except for a square table in the centre, on which rests a large bell-jar. Moving into the room you see that a key is hanging by a thread inside the jar, inscribed with something. Will you:

Lift the jar to get the key?	Turn to **99**.
Leave immediately?	Turn to **134**.



29

The moment the crown touches your head, waves of sickness and dizziness wash over you. Lose four Strength points. The crown is cursed, and you take it off immediately, and wait a few moments to recover. When you feel strong enough, you begin looking for a way out—turn to **182**.

30

The rock-face laughs, a great echoing roar: "The Spirits are impartial in the petty disputes of humans," you hear. "But I may help you."

There is a soft, golden glowing from the rock-floor just ahead of you, and then a pair of beautiful winged sandals appears. As you are marvelling at this, the voice continues, "Take heed mortal, these winged sandals will take you through the air twice as fast as you can walk. Use them only when absolutely essential, or they will turn to lead, and you will be rooted where you stand. But first," the voice continues, as you reach for the sandals, "I must discover if you are worthy of them; tell me this: suppose you were to travel 120 miles, walking part of the way and then, wearing the sandals, flying through the air the remaining distance. We will say it takes you seven days for the whole journey, and that you can cover 16 miles a day on foot. How many miles, out of the total, would you have walked?"

When you have worked this out, turn to the section with the same number. If you cannot work it out, turn to **175**.

31

The corridor ends shortly at a plain wooden door. You push at it, and it at once swings invitingly open, and you cautiously pass through and look around: you appear to be in a picture gallery of some kind—turn to **66**.

32

Helpless in the raging torrent, you go under for the last time, and your body is swept away into the depths beneath castle Scarpathia—your quest is over.

33

The torchlit corridor West turns South almost at once, and you follow it South for some distance, until you reach a dead-end. Since there seems to be no way further forward, you cast about for secret levers, but find none. However, on your left, a rectangular portion of the wall is painted bright red, and when you examine it more closely, you discover a small keyhole set into it. If you have a red key, turn to **195**. If not, you can stay here until you starve, or go back and face Clare, who will promptly turn you into a slug. In either case, your quest is over.

34

Choose three keys to try in the gate. Add together the numbers inscribed in them, and turn to that total.

35

You look at the cupboards. Will you try the cupboard on the left? Turn to **62** if so. Or the cupboard on the right? If so, turn to **101**.

36

The Golden Knight's jaw drops in amazement as you disappear, and he is no match for an invisible opponent. You dispatch him quickly, and, as the magic wears off, look for a way out—turn to **10**.

37

You follow the passage South for a short distance, and see a new corridor to your left. Will you:

Continue South?	Turn to **161**.
Try the way East?	Turn to **117**.

38

The way West turns to the South after a while, and you follow it for some little way, until you see a passage off to your left. Will you now:

Take the way East?	Turn to **117**.
Continue South?	Turn to **161**.

39

The fight over, you press on as quickly as you can over the swaying bridge. The old wooden slats creak and give as you move, but you are almost across when one of the slats suddenly gives way altogether. Roll two dice: if the score is less than your Dexterity score, turn to **128**; if it is the same or greater, turn to **109**.

40

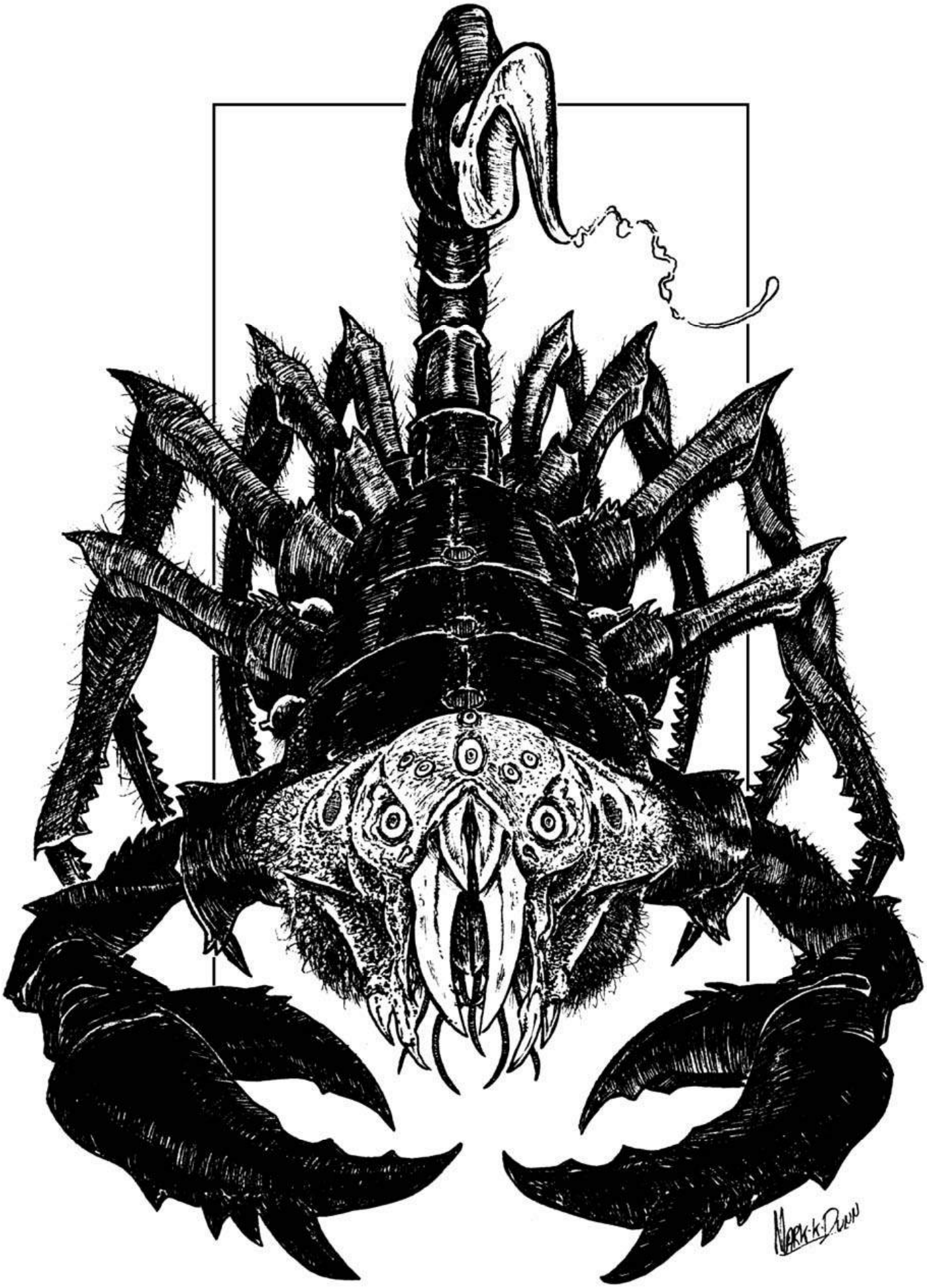
The door flies open when you turn the key, and a small dagger flies out, catching you in the arm—lose two Strength points. Looking further into the cupboard with some care, you find some worthless coins and cheap jewellery, and more weapons. However there is one piece that catches your eye: a solid gold ring set with a pure diamond. You put this into your pocket and look at the door again: turn to **107**.

41

The winding track almost peters out in the foothills, and you are casting about for the way forward, when movement catches your eye. A stone is suddenly dislodged, rolling and tumbling past you, and at once you are ready to defend yourself. A moment later, several large Hill-Trolls lumber into view. The vast creatures grumble and growl as they approach, and then one of them abruptly swings a great stone club at your head. Dodging the blow, you close at once in battle:

	Dexterity	***Strength***
HILL-TROLL:	8	12

If you win, turn to **95**.



42

As you walk East, you are alerted by the sight of a fierce-looking warrior approaching you. As you draw your sword, holding your ground, the figure does likewise; then your—and your reflection's—features break into a grin. Putting your sword away again, you walk forwards up to the mirror at the end of the corridor. You reach out your hand to touch the glass—and your hand passes straight through and disappears! Swiftly, you snatch it back: you seem to be unharmed, but you are puzzled. It appears that you could walk straight through the mirror. Will you:

Go through? Turn to **114**.
Go back the way you came? Turn to **177**.

43

A long corridor South stretches before you, and you move at a rapid pace along it, fearing pursuit. A short way down, however, you pass a corridor on your left. Stopping, you return and glance down it—there seems to be a dull-red glow from the floor not far distant that way. Will you now:

Take the way East? Turn to **139**.
Hurry on South? Turn to **4**.

44

Leaving the room via a door in the East wall, you follow a short corridor East, and then South, until it ends at another door. Warily, you push it open—turn to **172**.

45

The powerful magic takes effect as soon as you cast the spell: you can see and think clearly again, and move at a rapid pace through the swirling soporific mists and out of the petrified forest. You are in a low tunnel, sloping down more sharply—ahead, there is the sound of rushing water: turn to **198**.

46

The rope seems to take your weight well enough when you tug on it, and you pull yourself up and lock your ankles around it. You begin working your way towards the other side, though the rope starts to creak and groan alarmingly, stretching as you approach the middle until your back is just above the raging water, and foam splashes you. Moving quickly on, you have almost reached the opposite bank when the rope gives a shudder and snaps, the sound echoing above the rushing of the water in the tunnel. Throw two dice as you leap for the shore: if the score is the same as, or greater than your Dexterity score, turn to **68**. If it is less, turn to **121**.

47

You have to crouch in the small passage, as it turns almost at once to the East. A few paces further, and it opens out into a large circular depression—and there is something stirring in the ground! You hastily step back as a giant Scorpion rears up, its claws reaching for you and its barbed sting lashing overhead. If you wish to stand your ground and fight, turn to **89**. If you prefer to make use of the magic spell Vanish (if you have it), turn to **155**.

48

Your eyes running with tears as the acidic smoke attacks your skin and lungs, you grope for the way out; but too late. The fumes overpower you, the floor before you spins…your quest is over.

49

Once out of the door, you run as fast as you can down the corridor South. A few moments later, you run out into a small courtyard, flanked on both sides by badly made guard-huts. Guardsmen run out and surround you—you draw your sword, but they make no move until their captain pushes his way through. "What's this," he cries, "another on the payroll? Let me see the keys." You look to see three keyholes set into the wooden gate behind him. If you have three keys, turn to **77**. If you have fewer than three keys, turn to **153**. If you have more than three keys, turn to **34**.

50

This corridor is not a long one, and turns to the North after a time, and then quite soon, West again. At the end is a door, slightly ajar, and you hurry up to the door and listen. There are low voices coming from the room beyond—turn to **21**.

51

You have come so far…but without a document of authorisation you will never escape castle Scarpathia. You draw your sword—your quest is over.

52

As you begin to cast the spell, Volth begins chanting, his barking tongue summoning demons from hell. His magic is stronger than yours, and you feel weakness invading your limbs. Your sword drops from your grasp, and you look down in horror to see your limbs melting! Demons dance before you as your flesh drips from your bones…your quest is over.

53

You have never been so grateful for magic, as, coming up for perhaps the last time, you call out the words of the spell. Your lungs fill with air as your heavy equipment drags you down again, and you are able to breathe quite easily as the river carries you downstream and dumps you back on the West bank. You clamber out of the water and check your equipment: nothing is lost, but any provisions you might have had are ruined.

You walk South-West along the river bank until, quite soon, you find a tunnel leading Westwards into the rock-face, away from the river—turn to **131**.

54

Hoping that this is indeed a case where the sandals are essential, you step out off the ledge and into the air. For a heart-stopping moment, you fall, but then the sandals flutter into life, and you are carried swiftly up and over to the opposite side of the huge gap. Landing safely, you continue East until quite soon you see, by the ghostly blue light given off by the rocks, that a narrow passage leads North. Will you

Take the way North? Turn to **47**.
Continue East? Turn to **126**.

55

The sword lifts easily away, the hilt fitting comfortably into your hand, the blade perfectly balanced. It is an enchanted weapon, and you may add two points to your Fighting Power for all future battles. You now look around for an exit—turn to **182**.

56

You move quickly down a broad corridor, slowing as you see that the corridor ends at a drawn curtain. You approach this warily, and when you try to move it gently aside, you realise that it runs along the North side of a room, disguising the entrance. Getting down, you lift up the bottom edge, roll under and stand up—turn to **116**.

57

Holding the box at arm's length, you open it. But it appears to contain no nasty surprises, and so you look inside: a single key, inscribed with the number '98' nestles on velvet. Feeling sure that this will be of some use, you pocket the key before leaving the way you came. Turn to **85**.

58

The Hellbat defeated, you turn back to the food and drink laid out: you are suspicious of it, but so hungry and thirsty that you are eating and drinking before you have had time to think.

The food is good, and the drink refreshing; add five Strength points. There is plenty left over, and you decide to carry provisions with you: if you are wearing a backpack, you will be able to fill it with enough for five more meals, each of which will restore five Strength points. If you have no backpack, you can only carry sufficient for two such meals. Turn to **44**.

59

You take off with great ease simply by thinking of flying, and are soon high above both chasm and bridge. But halfway across, your heart and your stomach leap into your mouth—the sandals have turned to lead, and for you, the adventure is over.

60

You wake before dawn, restless and tired. Your sleep has refreshed you not at all, in fact you feel worse—lose two Strength points.

At sunrise, you continue East, until the track turns South, and you are climbing through jutting outcrops of oddly-shaped rocks. You arrive at a junction: there is a way to the East, and very faintly, you can see the towers of a castle in the distance. You head East—turn to **146**.

61

You head back down the track South until you get back to the junction. Once there, you continue on your original way East. Turn to **112**.

62

You try the keys until one turns—the door flies open and a small blade flies out, causing a nasty flesh wound—lose two Strength points. Looking into the cupboard warily, you find a few worthless coins and some cheap jewellery—presumably booty from previous victims. There is one piece which takes your eye, however: a solid gold ring set with a pure diamond. Placing the ring in your pocket, you rummage further and discover a few weapons, though none so fine as your own blade, and you ignore them, though Finn nervously takes a sword. Will you now try:

The right-hand cupboard?	Turn to **16**.
The door out?	Turn to **107**.

63

Warily, you introduce yourself, ready to draw your sword at any moment, and add that you are an adventurer, a sword for hire. The Golden Knight makes no hostile move, but eyes you cautiously, then tells you that he too is a mercenary. He has come to castle Scarpathia because he has heard that there may soon be a well-paid assignment on offer from baron Margas. He says no more, and, thinking quickly, you claim that you arrived for the same reason, but got lost in the labyrinthine castle. At this, the Knight laughs, saying he has had the same problem. Then he moves to the East wall, lifts off a painting and pushes the stone behind it. A large panel lifts up in the wall, and he courteously beckons you through. "I have no idea where baron Margas is now," adds the Knight, "though he must be around this infernal place somewhere!" Thanking the Golden Knight, you pass through the secret panel, which immediately drops behind you. It blends perfectly into the woodwork on this side, at the end of a corridor headed East. Turn to **97**.

64

You reach into your pocket and, turning your back on the Dwarf, take out the pouch and count out five gold pieces. Hoping that this is enough, you offer it to him, keeping a watchful eye all the time on the raised bell. The Dwarf sneers and inclines his head towards the archway—you get out quickly. Turn to **43**.

65

As soon as you cast the spell, it takes effect: the glowing, bubbling molten floor instantly solidifies and cools, and you can now see beyond it. Taking a deep breath, you walk swiftly across, quite unharmed, and approach a turning. As you reach it, the fire blazes up again behind you, and you swiftly round the corner and head South. A short way further, and you see that there is a corridor on your right. Will you:

Take the way West?	Turn to **31**.
Continue South?	Turn to **145**.

66

You wander slowly through the large room. In the centre is a long, polished wooden table, and the North and South walls

are lined with pictures: hunting scenes, portraits of a variety of villainous-looking men and women, battle scenes, and depictions of horrible deaths. You turn away, and go over to the table: there are a number of books on it, and also several glass jars, all empty but one, which flashes golden light back from the sputtering torches.

Taking great care, you lift the lid of this last one with your sword; and since nothing untoward happens, pick it up. It is heavy, and you realise that it is nearly half-full with gold coins: you tip them out, counting fifteen in all, and put them in your pocket. Then you see that one of the books is open on the table, as though someone had been recently reading it. Casting a wary look all about you, you sit down and read: it is the history of Scarpathia, you soon see, and settle down to read something of it. You soon learn that the lands were apparently much larger, extending over what is now the city of Alesso, and beyond. That a succession of Sorcerers or warrior-kings have ruled this land, a dynasty of tyrants, until some years ago. Then, for reasons that are not given, the kingdom fell apart, and split up. Alesso is mentioned several times, once as a 'rebellious city-state', and you begin to get an uneasy feeling about baron Margas' intentions.

You suddenly realise that you have been reading for some time, and jump to your feet, but everything is as it was; getting up, you look around some more—there is a large box against the South wall, so you go over to investigate. The box, you soon see, is old, and the lid lifts easily away when you lever it off with you sword. You lean over to look in—and leap back: laid in the bottom of the box, in fine armour and a cloak, is a corpse, and it has obviously been there some while. You now notice the smell, and, holding your breath, lean forward again.

There appears to be no danger: the warrior lies there, his arms folded across a jewelled sceptre, a fine crown on his head and his long sword at his side. You wonder who it was—perhaps one of Margas' predecessors, or an adventurer like yourself? You will never know, but at the moment, the crown, sceptre and sword take your eye. All three are valuable, and could be useful. You consider. If you wish to take the sword, turn to 9. If you wish to take the sceptre, turn to **80**. If you wish to try on the crown, turn to **111**. If you prefer to leave all three where they are, and look for an exit, turn to **182**.

67

You lift the jewel-encrusted, golden sceptre, and are surprised by a rattling sound. Giving the sceptre a shake, you realise that the noise is coming from the globe at the end of the stem; when you examine this more closely, you soon find that it splits into two halves, and inside is a key, inscribed with the number, '17'. Putting the key in your pocket, you replace the top of the globe and push the sceptre into your belt, before looking for a way out—turn to **182**.

68

You have not quite judged the distance correctly in your desperate bid for safety, and fall short of the bank and into the swirling waters. Weighed down by your equipment, arms and legs flailing, you are carried away downstream in the white water, drowning alone beneath castle Scarpathia. Your quest is over.

69

The moment you have finished speaking, the Troglodytes all begin to chatter and squeal at once, backing away. Then one of them picks up a stone and hurls it; in seconds they are all hurling stones and rocks at you, driving you back to the water's edge; as you stumble backwards, trying to defend yourself against the hail of missiles with your shield, you lose your footing, and tumble into the water. The current at once snatches you towards the centre of the river, and downstream. If you have the spell Breathe, turn to **53**. If not, turn to **144**.

70

Out of the room again, you retrace your footsteps North until you get back to the junction, and this time you head East—turn to **117**.

71

Sinte there appears to be nothing else whatsoever in the room, you leave again, and continue South—turn to **76**.

72

Pushing the door open fully, you walk in—it is hard to make much out in the darkness, but the room appears to be empty. As you are about to leave again, however, the floor suddenly drops away from your feet! If you are wearing winged sandals, turn to **174**. If not, turn to **113**.

73

You call out the words of the spell, and are gratified to see the unpleasant Dwarf's features instantly fixed in stone. However, you are well aware that the effects of the spell will not last forever, and, after a quick glance round the room, leave under the archway—turn to 43.

74

Using hands and feet, you climb up to the ledge of the cave, and haul yourself in. It takes a minute or two before your eyes adjust to the gloom, but then you begin exploring. You are disappointed to find that the cave is quite small, and contains nothing apart from a few mouldering bones strewn about the floor: perhaps it was used by the Hill-Trolls as a resting place.

As you turn to leave, however, a great voice booms out

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behind you, freezing you where you stand: "Who are you, and what do you ask of the Spirits?"

You whirl round—the rock-wall at the end of the cave has taken on features: you can distinguish eyes, and a mouth, which now opens again to roar at you, "Speak!" Swiftly you introduce yourself, unsure what to do or say next, as the rock-face glares at you. However, you feel that you had better think of something quickly. Will you say that you come seeking Margas and castle Scarpathia? Turn to **30**. Or that you are an innocent traveller? Turn to **82**.

75

Drawing your sword, you leap to the attack, but the Golden Knight is prepared, and steps back, his own sword at the ready. You close in battle.

	Dexterity	***Strength***
GOLDEN KNIGHT:	8	14

If you win this battle, turn to **149**.

76

Some way further on, the corridor turns sharply to your left, and you head East: this passage is quite short and ends at a door which is slightly ajar. You can make out the dull murmur of voices from the room beyond, and try to make out what is being said—turn to **21**.

77

Without all three keys, you cannot open the gate. The captain's features darken, and his men close in. You may die bravely, but your situation is hopeless—your quest is over.

78

One of the Troglodytes steps forwards and accepts your payment, then beckons you to follow him. You have to wait at the foot of the rock-face as he scampers up to his cave and then lowers a rope for you; you climb up and haul yourself inside, and are surprised when you look around. The cave has stone and wooden furniture, a good fire burning, and well-made rugs on the ground. The forger takes a piece of parchment from a drawer, sits at a stone desk, and begins writing. "I have no love for you, stranger," he says, in the same curious high-pitched voice, "but I have no love for Margas either. Take this document and good luck to you—I make no promises."

You wait patiently until he has finished writing. Then he dusts the document, shakes it and seals it, using a large seal from another drawer. Then he hands you the document, and you return to the beach the way you came. The small crowd of Troglodytes is still there as you walk back to the river's edge. Turn to **100**.

79

The sword lifts easily out, the hilt fitting your hand as though it were made for it. When you give it an experimental swing, it cuts smoothly through the air with a sound like a gasp of pleasure: it is an enchanted weapon, and you may add two points to your Fighting Power for all future battles. Will you now:

Try on the crown?	Turn to **29**.
Ignore it, and leave?	Turn to **182**.

80

The sceptre is made, as far as you can tell, of pure gold, encrusted with a variety of precious gems. It rattles when you lift it, and, puzzled, you give it a shake: there is something rattling about in the globe. When you examine the globe more carefully, you see that it is made in two halves, and the top lifts quite easily away from the bottom. Inside is a key,

with the number '17' inscribed in it. You put the key away in your pocket, replace the top of the sceptre and push it into your belt. Will you now take:

The sword?	Turn to **79**.
The crown?	Turn to **166**.
Neither, but look for a way out?	Turn to **182**.

81

Half-drowned, you call out the words of the spell: and are grateful for the air that suddenly fills your lungs. The water carries you downstream, and you fetch up quite soon on the West bank again, South-West of where you dived in. You drag yourself onto the shore, water pouring from you, and check your equipment: everything is intact, though any provisions you might have been carrying have been ruined by the water.

You have little choice now but to follow the course of the river, and you walk South-West along the bank until you come across a tunnel leading West away from the river—turn to **131**.

82

"Liar!" booms the rock-face, as soon as the words are out of your mouth, "Those who dare try to deceive the Spirits pay with their lives!"

The booming voice echoes around the cave, and then there is a new and even more threatening sound—you turn to see the entrance sealed as the rolling voice dislodges the rocks of centuries, a great thunderous hailstorm crashing about you. Your adventure is over.

83

The path South soon turns to the East, and then a short time later, North. You continue North, clambering over outcrops of polished rocks, until you see that there is a better path to the East—and in the distance, you can just make out the tall towers of a castle! You at once head East, towards the castle—turn to **146**.

84

Lose two Strength points, as you are so parched. You approach the archway—turn to **199**.

85

Back at the junction, will you now go:

East?	Turn to **185**.
West?	Turn to **192**.

86

You retrace your steps until you return to the junction with the passage North, and continue East—turn to **92**.

87

You walk South for some way, and then the passage turns to the West. Following it round, you see that there is a door ahead, and you pad quietly up to it: the door is slightly ajar, and there are low voices coming from the room beyond—turn to **21**.

88

Your blank face tells the evil pair all that they need to know. Volth mutters an incantation, and you suddenly feel as though your limbs were made of lead. You move agonisingly slowly towards the exit, as Margas approaches. "A spy," he grins, "good, I like dealing with spies." He draws his sword, and your own movements are too sluggish to oppose him. Volth looks on, smug satisfaction written over his face, as Margas lifts his double-edged blade. Your quest is over.

89

The giant Scorpion scuttles closer as you stand with your sword and shield raised. For this battle, throw the dice twice in each round for the Scorpion, once for its claws and once for its lashing sting, and deduct two points each time its Fighting Power is greater than yours. You have only one attack in each round.

	Dexterity	***Strength***
GIANT SCORPION:	9	14

If you survive, turn to 132.

90

The sword comes to your hand as though made for it, the blade glinting in the torchlight. It sings through the air when you swing it, light and perfectly balanced—for it is enchanted, and you may add two points to your Fighting Power for all future battles. Will you now look at the sceptre? Turn to **67** if so; or leave at once? Turn to **182** if so.

91

Choking and gasping, you can barely see as the acidic gases attack your skin, your eyes…the floor spins. Your quest is over.

92

The corridor East soon degenerates into a tunnel cut through rock, and begins to slope downwards. You follow it for some time, until it opens out into a fairly large, almost circular cave. High above, stalactites grow from the domed ceiling, glowing red and green; in front of you is a small forest of stalagmites, similarly giving off coloured light from the naturally phosphorescent rock.

You move slowly through this petrified forest, marvelling at the shapes and colours; water steadily falls in large drops, and mists rise from the floor. You begin to feel light-headed, the coloured lights are pulsing and swaying…if you have a Breathe spell, turn to **45**. If not, turn to **164**.

93

Slowly, the world comes back into focus, and you mentally explore your body: it does not feel as though you have any broken bones, but you ache everywhere. You can taste dried blood in your mouth, and your head is throbbing. Lose seven Strength points. You are unable to move your hands, and, as you struggle to your knees, you discover why—your hands are tied behind your back.

Standing upright now, you look around, wincing with pain: you are in a small, filthy cell, and what little light there is filters through the bars from guttering torches in the room beyond. There sits a fat jailer, keys on his belt, a dagger at his side and a hefty club at his feet on the floor. He sits with his feet on a low stool, snoring fitfully. As you stand gathering your senses, your hear a low voice calling, "Psst! Over here!" and turn to see a figure huddled against the bars of the cell on your right. The man calls to you again, his wary eyes bright with fear, and you go over to your side of the bars: "Got you, too, eh?" whispers the man. "It's a horrible end they've got planned for us." You bend down and introduce yourself, and the man responds, speaking quickly in a low voice: "I'm Finn, a hunter. The hill men got me last night—I saw them bring you in later. You know what they do, don't you?" You don't, but Finn is obviously going to tell you anyway, as he gabbles on, his eyes growing even wider with fear. "The guards pay the hill men a small ransom for any travellers they bring in alive—you know why?" You shake your head. "It's for the guards' games—they love to gamble on how long you'll last under torture."

Finn looks as though he is about to faint, and your own stomach turns over at hearing this. Your eyes dart about the cell again: bars line three sides, and you can see now that there is another prisoner in the cell on your left, apparently unconscious. The rear of the cell is stone, as is the floor. Finn shakes his head miserably. "So near," he moans, "but so far." He indicates the wall behind you: "Beyond the wall is freedom. But the wall is ten feet of solid stone. The jailer told me when they brought me in, we're against the West wall of the castle, bound and barred, and with just a few paces of rock between us and the outside world. And tomorrow we die—slowly." His voice tails off, his face a picture of misery.

As Finn finishes speaking, the jailer gives a sudden loud snore and wakes himself. Seeing that you, too, are conscious, he shambles over to the bars of the cell and leers. "We've got some treats in store for you," he slobbers. He points to Finn: "You can watch first, to see how long that one lasts—" Finn gives a quiet shriek, and the jailer guffaws, "then it'll be your turn." He meets your hard stare: "You'll be squealing like the best of them tonight," he grins nastily.

Your situation is dire, and you have only one hope—magic. If you have them, you could try the spell of Vanish—turn to **115**; of Freeze—turn to **122**. If you have no magic, you are lost.

94

The rickety bridge takes your weight, but sways and creaks in the still morning air as you cautiously make your way across. You are more than halfway over when you suddenly become aware of a new threat—hovering above you are a number of Vultures, larger than any you have seen anywhere. The Vultures begin diving and swooping, and it is soon obvious that you are going to have to defend yourself—the Vultures have decided not to wait until you are a corpse before they tear the flesh from your bones! Reduce your Dexterity by three points for this battle, because of your precarious position, and treat the Vultures as one enemy, as they wheel and dive again.

	Dexterity	***Strength***
VULTURES:	7	8

If you defeat them, turn to **39**.

95

At the sight of one of their number slain, the other Hill-Trolls take fright, and lumber off back out of sight, snarling and growling. You put away your sword and look around again. There is no obvious way further forward, but just above you is a cave entrance. Will you:

Explore the cave?	Turn to **74**.
Go back South and East?	Turn to **61**.

96

Reaching the door, you cautiously inch it open. It swings back, protesting, on rusty hinges, and you look inside: it is too dark to make anything out, and the room smells of the dust of ages. Will you:

Go back East?	Turn to **130**.
Look inside?	Turn to **72**.

97

The passageway heads East only a short way, then turns South, and you follow it for a fair distance, until you again reach a T-junction. Will you now go:

East? Turn to **17**.
West? Turn to **38**.

98

The trapdoor lifts up with the harsh, grating sound of stone on stone, and you look down a flight of stone steps, descending into darkness. Taking a torch from the wall, you try to see further, but the poor light does not penetrate far, and so you move cautiously down, the torch in one hand and your sword in the other. At the bottom of the steps, a tunnel runs off West, and you follow this for some way. The tunnel is low and narrow, and echoing drips of water splash onto the slippery floor. Menacing shadows dance ahead of you, but you are not attacked; reaching a flight of stairs upwards, you climb until your head bumps softly against stone. A good push from your shoulders, and the ceiling begins lifting up; sword and torch first, you climb up into the room, dropping the trapdoor behind you—turn to **116**.

99

As you lift the jar, air mixes with the gases trapped inside, and the room is filled with noxious green fumes. Almost at once, you drop to your knees, choking on the stinging cloud. If you have the spell of Breathe, turn to **188**. If not, turn to **48**.

100

The Troglodytes make no hostile moves as you return to your raft and push off downstream. You fetch up fairly soon on the opposite bank, South and West of the Troglodytes' encampment, and see that not far distant to the South, a tunnel seems to lead Westwards away from the river. You walk down to this new tunnel—turn to **131**.

101

You find the correct key to open the cupboard, and rummage inside; there are a number of different swords—though none so fine as your own—and other weapons. Finn takes one of the swords for himself as you continue looking, and discover your backpack—but, to your disappointment, it is empty. Will you now try:

The left-hand cupboard? Turn to **40**.
The door out? Turn to **107**.

102

You swiftly take the keys from your pocket and try them in the gate. At once, you know that something is wrong: the gate stays shut, and the captain's features darken. You have the wrong keys, and the guardsmen at once close in—you draw your sword, but your quest is over.

103

Reaching the door, you push it open. Dust and fumes rise into the flickering light, and you wait, trying to make out substance from shadow. As you are doing so, the shadows form into a ghastly shape—a long-dead corpse approaches, flesh rotting from its bones, its eyes glinting in dark sockets. Will you:

Fight at once? Turn to **189**.
Use the spell Vanish (if you have it)? Turn to **138**.

104

Holding your breath, you reach out for the winged sandals, and try them on. They fit perfectly, but when you look up

again to thank your benefactor, the face in the rock has faded to nothing. Shaking your head, you climb back out of the cave, and make your way back down the track to the junction at which you first turned off, where you continue on your original way East. Fairly soon, however, the path turns to the South, and you are climbing again. As the sun sets, you make camp for the night, settling down as best you can among the chilly, weather-beaten rocks.

As dawn breaks you wake, feeling greatly refreshed despite your hard bed (add two Strength points), and are soon on your way South again. The ground falls away from the path you are following as you walk, and then suddenly drops away in front of you into a chasm running East-West. The chasm is spanned by an unsafe-looking bridge made from vines and wooden slats, but it seems that this bridge is the only way forward now. There is, of course, the fact that you are now wearing the winged sandals, but you wonder whether their use is essential here. Will you:

Try flying across?	Turn to	**59**.
Walk?	Turn to	**94**.

105

In the distance ahead of you, as you walk West, you can see a dull-red glow; beyond that, the passage is obscured. As you get closer, you discover the reason: your pace slows as a wave of heat wafts towards you, and you cautiously approach to within a few yards of a pool of molten rock. The stone floor of the passage seems to have melted in some intense heat, and is bubbling and hissing before you, sending up clouds of acrid smoke and steam, and spitting red-hot cinders. You back off—the only way forward here is by means of magic. If you have a Quench Fire spell and wish to use it, turn to **65**. If you have not got the spell, or do not wish to use it here, you will have to go back to the last junction, and this time try the way East—turn to **86**.

106

Only slightly breathless after your brief skirmish, you look around. On the table, almost lost among the half-eaten loaves and spilled wine, is a small box. Evidently the Goblins were meant to be guarding it; you consider whether or not to risk trying to open it. If you wish to try, turn to **57**. If you would rather leave the box alone, and go back South, turn to **85**.

107

Opening the door again, you move cautiously with Finn into the gloomy, East-bound corridor. This soon ends at a four-way junction, where you could go North or South, or continue East. As the two of you try to decide which way to go next, there is a shout and two Guards suddenly appear from the North. At once you are into action, your sword cutting through the air, as Finn engages the other Guard.

	Dexterity	***Strength***
GUARD:	7	8

If you win, turn to **3**.

108

This spell enables you to disappear completely for a short time, time enough to escape attack from most creatures. Altrus teaches you the words necessary. Turn to **146**.

109

With a crack like a whip, the rotten wood shatters, and you are left dangling high above the chasm, hanging onto the vine that held the slats together. Painfully slowly, hand-over-hand, you inch the short remaining distance to the safety of the South side. You are unhurt, but the effort costs you three Strength points.

When you are ready, you get up and prepare to continue South—turn to **83**.

110

You realise that your sword and shield will weigh you down, but you cannot bear to leave them behind. Any provisions you have will be ruined in the water, and so, if you have sufficient food, you may stop to eat one meal on the bank before leaving the remainder. When you are ready, you plunge into the fast-flowing waters—turn to **143**.

111

The moment you place the crown on your head, you experience a wave of nausea and weakness. For it is cursed, and though you lift it off immediately, you are still weakened. Lose four Strength points. Will you now take:

The sword?	Turn to	**90**.
The sceptre?	Turn to	**14**.
Neither, but leave at once?	Turn to	**182**.

112

It is not long before the path East turns to the South, and you are climbing again. By sunset, you feel that you have covered a good distance, and settle down for the night, making a bed as best you can among the weather-worn rocks.

You wake with the dawn, feeling much refreshed despite the hardness of your bed—add two Strength points—and the sun is just fully risen over the horizon as you are on your way again. The ground starts to slope away on either side of the track you are following, and then you are abruptly faced with a great chasm ahead of you, spanned by a bridge of vines and wooden slats. At the bottom of the chasm, you can make out a track running East-West, but your immediate problem is getting from North to South. A little further exploration soon convinces you that you will have to risk the bridge if you are going to progress any further—turn to **94**.

113

Your adventure is over, as you drop like a stone into the foul depths beneath castle Scarpathia.

114

You pass unharmed through the mirror, and look around. But you can make out nothing; insubstantial mists rise, and colours flicker in the shadows as you grope your way around. Feeling uneasy, you turn back: but the mirror on this side reflects the rear of your image! You are looking at the back of your own head. You try to walk back through the mirror, but it is as though you were on a treadmill in fog. You are trapped in the land of mists and shadow, your quest over.

115

You mumble the words to invoke the spell, and it is obvious from the astonished gasps from both Finn and the jailer that the spell has worked. The jailer, frowning in bewilderment, tugs his keys from his belt and opens your cell, staring wildly all about him. Silently, you turn and slip the dagger from his belt; then, your wrists freed, dart over to his stool and pick up the heavy club. A second later, and the jailer drops to the floor, a large lump on his head. Finn is looking at you, lost for words, as you rematerialise with the club in your hand, looking pleased with yourself. Taking the keys, you re-lock your cell. Turn to **137**.

DE·IEHW 87

116

You are in a small, rectangular room. Tapestries line three walls, and there is an archway in the South wall; and sitting opposite you, smirking, is a dwarf. He says nothing for a moment, and you look at each other; you notice that he is holding something at his side, and then make out what it is—a bell. "Welcome," begins the dwarf, grinning unpleasantly, "and what's this? An escaped prisoner, eh? On the run, eh?" He slowly raises the bell, as your expression obviously confirms his guess, "maybe I'd better call for help… unless…" he holds out his other hand, rubbing his fingers.

If you have gold pieces, and wish to try bribing the Dwarf, turn to **64**. If you have magic, the spell Freeze would obviously be useful here; if you wish to try it, turn to **73**. If you would rather attack immediately instead, turn to **18**.

117

You can just see that the passage turns to the South some distance ahead, and you are about halfway towards the turning when you stop: there is an alcove to your left, and hovering in it, about a foot off the ground, is an imp, its arms and legs crossed, its head tilted quizzically on one side, looking at you thoughtfully. "Well, well," chirrups the small figure, "what have we here? A human-thing, wandering alone below castle Scarpathia. Perhaps we ought to help it escape…though it thinks it's fierce and clever enough to do that all by itself. Oh no, oh no," the imp wags a reproving finger at you, and you find yourself smiling, "oh, no. You'll never escape the clutches of our friend baron Margas unless you know the password. Do you know the password?" And even as you open your mouth to speak, the imp continues, "thought not. You'll need it. Listen carefully, and I'll tell you: Margas' personal guard is made up of guardsmen and captains of the guards. Now four captains in charge of fifty guardsmen are paid 120 gold pieces between them; while six captains and seventy guardsmen earn 170 gold pieces. What is a captain's pay? For that is the password—the pay of a captain."

If you can work this out, make a note of the answer and turn to **152**. If you cannot work it out, turn to **123**.

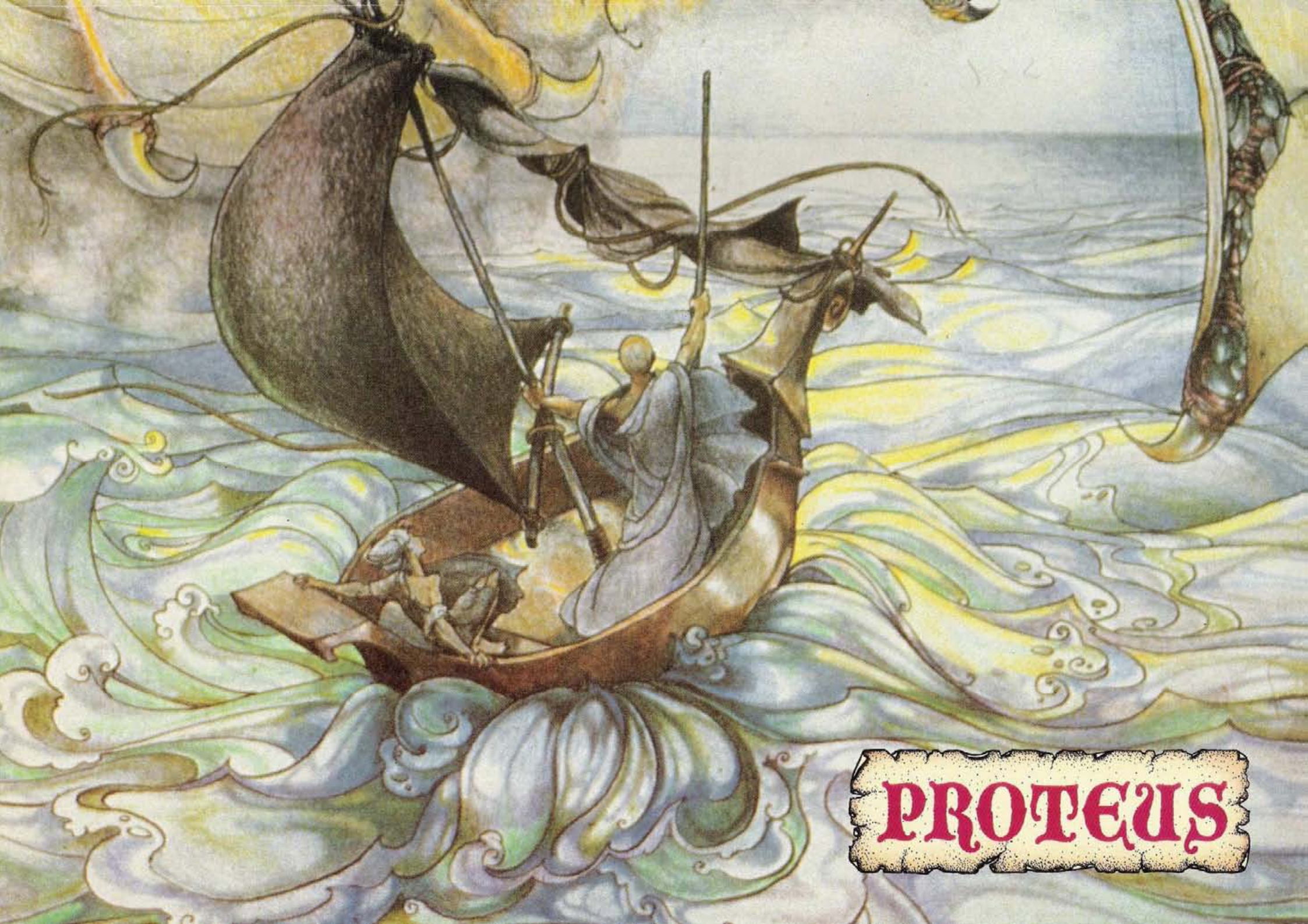
118

Swiftly, you head North and East, and back under the archway into Clare's room. She glares at you: "Back again!" she shrieks, "if I see you again, I'll turn you into a slug!" Ducking your head, you hurry awkwardly across the room and out through the archway in the East wall—turn to **22**.

119

You move East at a good pace until the torches in the wall-brackets end, and then move more cautiously, your hands on the walls either side. You are in a rock tunnel, wet and slippery, and your progress is slow. Suddenly, the ground disappears from beneath your feet, and you fall headlong! Lose four Strength points.

When you recover your senses, you realise that you have fallen down a flight of stone steps; you get up, bruised, and continue down the tunnel East. It slopes downwards, and you can hear water in the distance. Soon there is light ahead, and you step out onto the bank of a wide underground river. However, although you walk up and down along the shore for a minute or two, there seems to be no way that you can see across, and so you turn back and walk up the tunnel again, more carefully this time, until you reach the steps. Once up those, you continue back into the torchlit corridor to the junction, and this time go West—turn to **50**.


PROTEUS

120

The tunnel South turns to the East again quite soon, still sloping downwards, and you emerge at a trot onto a narrow river-bank. The underground river flows South-West, and is quite wide here, although the water appears fairly calm. There is a poorly-made wooden raft lashed up to a post, bobbing gently in the water as waves lap at your feet. Opposite, the rock-face is sheer, but there seems to be a small cove at which to land, and for a fleeting moment, you see movement on the beach. Will you:

Swim across? Turn to **27**.
Risk the raft? Turn to **180**.

121

Your desperate leap for safety is well-timed, and your foot just splashes into the river as you land on the bank. After a moment or two to check that you have lost nothing, you consider which way to go: to your left, the bank soon disappears, and the river is bound on both sides by sheer cliff-faces. To the right, however, the bank steadily widens, and you follow the river, heading South-West on the Eastern side, until the river-bank widens out: you are in a small, natural bay, and the river is wider and calmer here. Above you, the rock-face rises almost sheer, honeycombed with the entrances to caves—turn to **154**.

122

Hoping Altrus' magic does not let you down, you swiftly mutter the words of the spell, and are pleased to see the jailer instantly transformed into stone. Working quickly, you turn round and tug the dagger from his belt, then, your wrists freed, take the keys and let yourself out. You give the jailer a push, and he tumbles into the cell; re-locking the cell, you rub your wrists and look around—turn to **137**.

123

The imp continues to grin gently at you, offering no further clues; you are quite sure that neither magic nor force would be useful in a situation such as this, and so have to leave the small hovering figure and continue on your way East, thinking about what the imp said. You follow the corridor as it turns South, and walk a fair way South until you again reach a junction. This time, will you go:

East? Turn to **92**.
West? Turn to **105**.

124

The door opens, creaking, when you try it, and you cautiously poke your head round—and leap back into the corridor again! A massive Bear is inside, rearing up on its hind legs, twice as tall as you! A moment or two later, you feel rather foolish as you realise that the great beast is absolutely still—you are looking at a statue! You re-enter the room, and look about: it is quite a small room, and there appears to be nothing else in it apart from the statue. Looking at the statue again, you realise that it has a tooth missing from its jaw—there is a gap where the fourth sharp incisor should be. If you have a bear's tooth, turn to 140. If not, turn to **71**.

125

You carve the number into the rock with your sword-tip, and, sure enough, the wall slowly grates to one side, enabling you to pass through. The wall at once grates back into its position, quite hidden from this side. You are in a corridor running North-South; will you head:

North? Turn to **171**.
South? Turn to **37**.

126

Further ahead, you can see that the passageway ends at a junction, as you move swiftly East. When you reach this junction you see that the tunnel runs both North and South, turning East again in both cases. Will you now go:

North? Turn to **19**.
South? Turn to **186**.

127

The sceptre rattles as you lift it, and you examine it more carefully. It is a fine piece, worked from gold and encrusted with jewels, but there is something in the globe. You soon discover that the globe is made in two halves, and when you separate them, you discover a key inside, inscribed with the number, '17'. Putting the key safely into your pocket, you replace the top of the globe, and push the sceptre into your belt. Will you now:

Put on the crown? Turn to **29**.
Leave? Turn to **182**.

128

As the slat gives, you run forwards across the remaining few yards, and dive for the safety of the South side. You are unhurt, and quickly get up and dust yourself down before continuing South—turn to **83**.

129

Altrus tells you the words of the incantation required to work this spell; it will enable you to put out small or large fires. Turn to **146**.

130

Before you reach the door at the end of this passage, you come across a way to the North, which also has a door at the end. Will you now go:

North? Turn to **26**.
On Eastwards? Turn to **103**.

131

The tunnel is cold and dripping with moisture when you look in, and dark as night. Cautiously, you follow it West, your hands on the sides, until you suddenly stumble and trip. Feeling ahead gingerly, you feel steps, and begin walking up. After what seems like an age, you are relieved to see light ahead, and hurry up the remaining steps and into a torch-lit corridor. The corridor is perfectly straight, lit by torches spluttering in the walls, and after a time you reach a junction; a passage leads off to the North. Will you now:

Go North? Turn to **142**.
Continue West Turn to **50**.

132

Sweating after your tough battle, you sheathe your sword and walk around the hollow. There is a small pile of rocks at the back, stacked into the shape of a pyramid; you give it a cautious kick, and it partly collapses, exposing a metal object gleaming in the bluish light that seeps from the rocks. Bending closer, you discover a key, inscribed with the number, '52'. At once pocketing this, you examine the cavern again, but finding nothing more, go back West and South to the junction to continue on your way East—turn to **126**.

133

Choking, your lungs half-full of water, you manage to call out the words of the spell, and gratefully suck in deep lungfuls of air. You begin swimming, and shortly fetch up at a shingled inlet on the East side. You drag yourself out of the water and look back: the current has carried you South-West, and the river is wider and calmer here.

Checking your equipment, you soon discover that the water has ruined any provisions you might have, though your sword and shield are still intact. However, there is nothing that can be done about that now. The shingled beach that you have landed on slopes up sharply to a sheer rock-face, honeycombed with small cave-openings—turn to **154**.

134

The corridor turns to the West fairly soon, and you follow it until, quite soon, it turns South. You notice, as you begin walking South, that there is a rectangle of wall on your right painted bright red, and stop to look more closely. You are fairly sure that it is in fact a door, but there is no keyhole on this side, and it does not give when you push at it, and so you continue South with a shrug. Turn to **87**.

135

You trot down the short passage until you get to the junction. Will you now go:

North?	Turn to **170**.
South?	Turn to **145**.

136

The corridor North soon ends at a T-junction, where you must decide which way to go next. There are doors a short way down in both directions. Will you go:

East?	Turn to **130**.
West?	Turn to **96**.

137

Finn is calling to you frantically as you examine the room beyond the cells; but first, you pick up your sword and shield from the corner where they have been dumped, and buckle them on. You check the prisoner in the third cell, but he is no longer breathing. Then you free Finn, who gabbles his thanks as you look around again; there is a door in the East wall, and two large wooden cupboards to the right of it. You try the door—it is unlocked, and you peer out into a gloomy, torchlit corridor. "It's no good, we'll never escape," Finn is lamenting, "we're lost, and this place is crawling with guards and I don't know what else."

Ignoring him, you examine the two cupboards again. You still have the keys, so will you try the cupboards? If so, turn to **35**. Alternatively, you could leave at once—turn to **107**.

138

The spell takes effect immediately, and as the ghastly creature's hands search for you in vain, you dodge past and escape through a door in the East wall. Closing the door behind you as the magic begins to wear off, you notice a crescent-shaped pendant and a red key hanging from the door; pocketing the red key, you examine the pendant. Will you:

Wear it?	Turn to **151**.
Leave it alone?	Turn to **160**.

139

A few paces down, you see—and feel—the cause of the red glow: hand before your face, you slowly approach what feels like a furnace. You cannot see the cause, but the whole stone floor here is a gently-bubbling red-hot pool, giving off steaming waves of heat. You cannot bear to even stay close for long, as you feel your eyebrows and hair starting to singe. You cannot tell what is beyond the molten floor, as the smoke and steam obscures vision; if you wish to progress further this way, your only hope is a Quence Fire spell. If you have the spell and wish to use it, turn to **162**. Otherwise, you will have to return to the junction and go South instead—turn to **4**.

140

You take the bear's tooth from your pocket and, stretching up, push it into the gap in the lower jaw. There is a soft rolling sound, and a silver-white orb rolls out of the bear's mouth, coming to rest against the lower fangs. You lift out this prize and look at it: it is a pearl, as large as the palm of your hand, and set all round with stars of solid silver and gold. It must be worth a fortune, and pocketing this treasure, you go out again to continue on your way South—turn to **76**.

141

Both conspirators look doubtful at this claim, but eventually Margas moves away. "Very well," he says, "then report to the main gate," indicating an exit in the South wall. You edge towards the door, hardly able to believe your luck, but are stopped in your tracks as Margas suddenly shouts, "Wait! If you are indeed what you say, then you will first have been given the password. What is it?" If you know the password, turn to the section number included in it. If you do not, turn to **88**.

142

The corridor North continues some way, though you can make out a turning at the end. However, about half-way along, you stop at a door on your left. You listen, but can hear nothing. Will you:

Open the door?	Turn to **28**.
Ignore it, and continue North?	Turn to **134**.

143

You are carried swiftly South-West, tumbling and rolling in the white water. It is worse than you feared—your sword and shield are indeed heavy, and you go under repeatedly. Throw two dice twice: if the total is the same as, or greater than your Strength score, turn to **32**. If it is less than your Strength score, turn to **13**.

144

Your situation is hopeless; weighed down by your sword and shield, and unprepared for this sudden turn of events, your lungs fill with water as your body is swept away…your quest is over.

145

In the distance directly ahead, you can see that the corridor ends at a wooden door. As you approach, you see that there is some sort of plaque on the door, with an inscription on it. You walk up to read, "SEI LOHWREL LETENUT ROFEHT ERALC". You puzzle over this strange inscription for a few minutes, then cautiously push open the door.

The room is quite small, and wildly-patterned silks hang from every wall. In the centre of the little room is a round table; sitting at that, and gazing at you, is a very old woman, also dressed in flowing silks. Her tiny, penetrating eyes search yours as you stand at the door, unsure what to say or do now, and then she addresses you: "Enter, my dear, enter," she croaks, "I am Clare, and I see that you are troubled. Let

me read your fortune, and tell you what the future has in store for you. Come, come closer."

As you slowly inch forward, your hand ready to close on your sword-hilt, she seems to guess what you are thinking: "Do not use force against me, my dear," she smiles, "or your sword will turn against you. And any spells that you possess will not work in this room, I assure you. Come," she coaxes, "give Clare a diamond, that I may look into its misty depths and tell your future."

If you have a diamond ring and wish to give it to Clare, turn to **24**. If you prefer to ignore her, turn to **165**.

146

The track you are following soon peters out, and you find yourself clambering over oddly-shaped, weather-beaten reddish rock. Thunderclouds gather about a huge, pale sun, mist swirls and giant, albatross-like birds swoop and cry. And as you stop for a moment to catch your breath, you watch in awe as a blue-robed figure rises slowly from the rocks themselves, directly above you. With eyes like white fire behind a threatening bronze mask, the figure looms over you, and then speaks, its voice deep and resonant: "I am Altrus, Spirit of the Mountains. Why do you walk here, through a land so dangerous to a mere mortal?"

You tell this obviously powerful apparition the true reason for your quest at once—that you are off to pit your wits and strength against Margas and castle Scarpathia. There is silence—you hope an impressed silence—before Altrus speaks again. When he does, his voice is softer: "Margas is a powerful and ruthless warrior," he warns, "and he protects himself well against intruders. If you destroy him, your world will be a better place for it, however, and I am prepared to aid you—though I fear your task will still be impossible. Nevertheless, you may choose any three of four spells to help you in your quest—each will work only once. Now choose:"

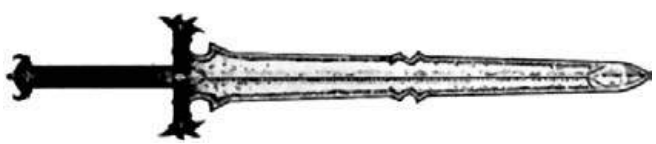
Quench Fire	Turn to **129**.
Breathe	Turn to **25**.
Vanish	Turn to **108**.
Freeze	Turn to **159**.

After you have chosen a spell, you will be directed back to this section to choose another. When you have chosen three spells, turn to **147**.

147

Having learnt the third of your spells, you are wondering what to say next when Altrus removes his mask. There is a blinding white glow from behind the mask, and you close your eyes tight. When you open them again, Altrus has gone, and you look out over the barren landscape at the tall, pointed spires of castle Scarpathia in the distance North-East of you.

You continue towards the castle, which drops into and out of view as you clamber over the difficult terrain, and are about to take a breather when an arrow whistles past your ear! At once alert, you turn, sword and shield in hand to face your attacker: you see at once that you are faced by not one, but three squat, ugly men clad in skins. One of these is the bowman, while the other two carry spiked clubs, and even as you prepare for battle, a noise to your right, and then another from your left, jerks your head round. You are surrounded by these small, warlike men, and raise your shield as another arrow wings towards you, while others close in with clubs and daggers. You are determined to sell your life dearly—turn to **93**.



148

You know almost as soon as you have tried the keys that they do not fit. The gate stays firmly shut, and the captain orders his men to the attack: your quest is over.

149

You look around the room: most of the furnishings have been smashed in the battle, but you explore the wreckage, hoping to find some artefact that might help you to escape from the castle. However, you find nothing, and so turn to leave. Turn to **10**.

150

You follow the corridor North, and then round to the West, until you reach an oak-panelled dead-end. You spend a little time trying to discover whether there are any secret levers or switches, but find none. Slightly annoyed, you shrug your shoulders and head back East and South to the junction. Will you now go:

East?	Turn to **17**.
West?	Turn to **38**.

151

As soon as you put on the pendant, you feel waves of weakness wash over you—the pendant is cursed, and you are unable to remove it. Reduce your Dexterity score by two, and turn to **160**.

152

Now that you know the password, you continue East, leaving the imp hovering in his alcove, and follow the passage round to the South. You walk South some little way before you reach the next junction: the corridor stretches across to left and right, and you must decide which way to try next. Will you go:

East?	Turn to **92**.
West?	Turn to **105**.

153

Add the numbers on your keys together, and turn to that total.

154

You move forward across the shingle, looking up at the caves. The light is better on this side of the river, bathing everything a yellowish hue, and as you watch, a small figure drops down from one of the caves and scampers across the rock-face, finding hand- and toe-holds where you can see none. Gradually, several more figures appear, shaggy and ape-like, with large, saucer-like eyes, but distinctly human features. You have stumbled across a tribe of Troglodytes, and as you watch, they pour out of the caves and down the beach. Soon you are facing several dozen of them, whispering to each other, and pointing at you. After a moment, one of them approaches and addresses you in a high-pitched voice: "We do not welcome strangers. Who are you, and what do you want?"

Having said his piece, the Troglodyte steps back again several paces, as the tribe becomes silent, awaiting an answer. Will you say you are one of Margas' mercenaries? Turn to **69** if so. Or will you say that you are an escaped prisoner seeking freedom? If so, turn to **12**.

155

You chant the spell, and the Scorpion's deadly sting stops abruptly in mid-air, as the creature searches for you. You rapidly run back East and South to the junction, as the spell wears off, and continue on your original way East—turn to **126**.

156

With relief, you manage to escape the horrible clutches of the undead zombie, and escape through a door in the East wall. Closing it behind you, you lean against it, and feel your shoulder touch something hard. Looking round, you see a crescent-shaped pendant hanging from the door, and a red key. Putting the key in your pocket, you examine the pendant. Will you:

Wear it?	Turn to **151**.
Leave it alone?	Turn to **160**.

157

You place the jewel-bedecked crown upon your head—and immediately are overcome with weakness. The crown is cursed, and though you get it off your head at once, it still costs you four Strength points. When you have recovered, you may take the sceptre—turn to **67**; or look for an exit—turn to **182**.

158

You hurry back West, past the corridor leading to the room where you fought the Goblin Guards, and on to the first corridor from the North. Pressing on, you head West this time—turn to **38**.

159

This spell works only against humanoid creatures, but when you cast it, the object of the spell will turn to stone, enabling you to pass safely. Altrus tells you the necessary incantation. Turn to **146**.

160

You continue East for only a short distance before the corridor turns North and ends at another door. You push it cautiously open—turn to **172**.

161

The corridor narrows and becomes darker, and you walk more cautiously, your sword before you. Ahead, you can hear a deep growling and advance slowly under a low archway into a dimly-lit room. A sudden roar makes you leap into the air, and you back away hurriedly as a huge Bear, fangs and claws glinting in the torch-light, moves to the attack. If you have the spell Vanish, and wish to use it here, you will have to be fast—turn to **190**. If you stand and fight, turn to **196**.

162

You call out the words to the spell, and the searing heat abruptly dies away. Rather uncertainly, you walk forwards—and find that the floor is now quite cool and solid. You are barely across, however, when you feel a blast like the desert wind at your back, and turn to see that the magic has obviously worn off: once again, the stone floor is glowing red, and already starting to bubble and smoke. You hurry forwards and on through a door into a large room: you seem to be in a picture-gallery of some kind. Turn to **66**.

163

The torchlit corridor West turns South almost at once, and you follow it South for some way until you reach a dead-end. Casting about for hidden levers, you notice that rectangular section of the wall on your left is painted bright red, and, looking more closely, you see that it has a keyhole set into it. If you have a red key, turn to **195**. If not, you will have to go back—turn to **118**.

164

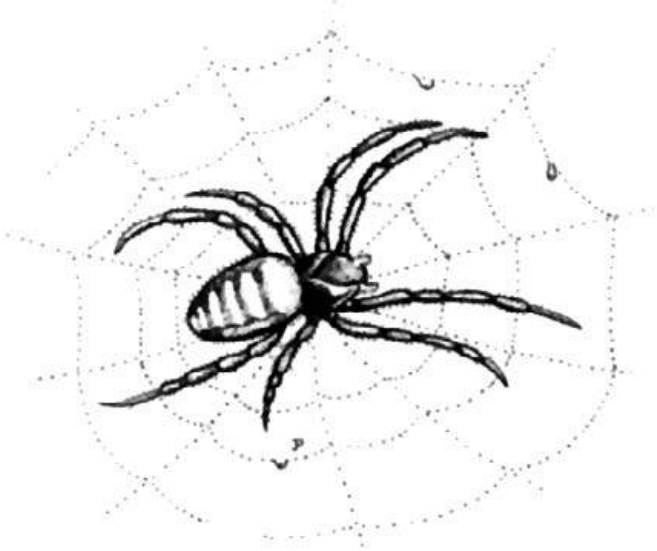
Without magic, you are lost! You collapse to the floor as the mists close about your head and your eyes close into a never-ending sleep…water drips steadily onto your body: eventually, you will be one more oddly-shaped stone in this petrified forest.

165

Clare watches balefully as you move round her, towards an archway on the right, half-hidden by the multi-coloured drapes. As you reach it, you see that there is a similar way out in the wall opposite. Clare does not move or say anything, but her menacing black pupils follow you as you move. Will you leave via the archway in the West wall? Turn to **163** if so; or the archway in the East wall? If so, turn to **23**.

166

As soon as you try the crown on your head, you feel sick and dizzy, dropping to your knees as nausea sweeps over you. And though you get the crown of at once, and slowly recover, the experience costs you four Strength points: the crown is cursed. Will you now try the sword? If so, turn to **55**. If you prefer to look for a way out immediately instead, turn to **182**.



DE-HEAVY 87

167

The minute you have tried the keys, you know that you have made a mistake. The gate stays shut, and the captain of the guard, accompanied by his men, stalks towards you: you will go down fighting, but your quest is over.

168

As you lift the bell-jar, air mixes with the gases trapped inside, and the room abruptly fills with searing fumes that drop you to your knees, choking. If you have the Breathe spell, turn to **20**. If not turn to **91**.

169

You draw your sword—and are rooted to the spot as Volth mutters incantations. Your fine blade shimmers and evaporates as Volth continues his chanting; your legs turn to jelly—Margas advances, a spiked ball-and-chain in his massive fist, and murder in his eyes. Your quest is over.

170

The passage North turns to the East quite soon: but ahead of you is a familiar red glow—the passage is blocked by a pool of smoking, molten rock, sending waves of intense heat towards you. You can go no further this way without a Quench Fire spell, which you now no longer have, and you turn away from the searing heat and go back West and South to the last junction. On your right now is the picture-gallery, and so you press on South—turn to **145**.

171

You go North, then after a short time, East again until you reach a new junction—a passage leads off to the North. Here, will you:

Go North?	Turn to **150**.
Continue East?	Turn to **17**.

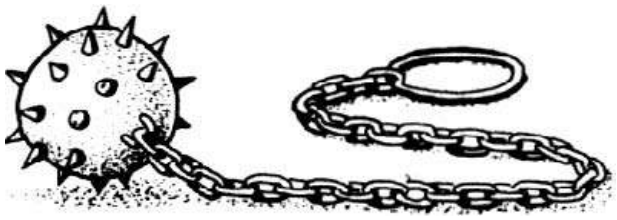
172

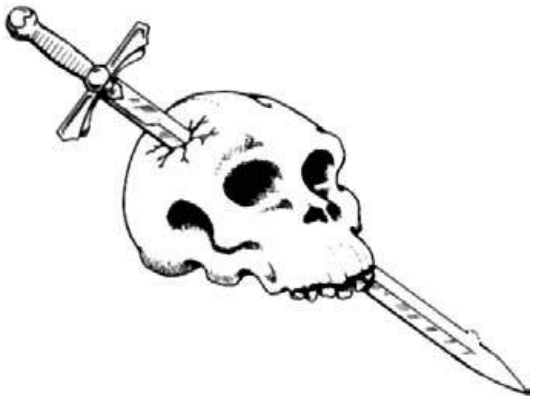
The door snaps shut behind you as you edge through it, and you blink for a few moments in the bright light. As your eyes adjust, you are surprised to see, in the centre of the room, a table with the remains of a meal. Sitting at the table, regarding you thoughtfully, is a large man clad in golden plate-mail. Getting up, he leans his fists on the table, and asks who you are and what you are doing. Will you:

Talk, hoping to gain time?	Turn to **63**.
Attack at once?	Turn to **75**.
Try magic, if you have it?	Turn to **178**.

173

The Knight's features freeze into stone, and you look for a way out. But the door through which you entered is locked fast, and all your attempts to hack a way through it are in vain. In desperation, you look around, and see that there is a door in the opposite wall—but your relief is short-lived: it too is shut fast. Soon, you realise, the spell will wear off, and you are going to have to deal with a very angry Knight! Even if you survive the forthcoming battle, you will be trapped in this room, in the depths of castle Scarpathia. Your quest is over.





174

Miraculously, the sandals flutter into life, and you are carried on tiny wings back to the threshold. Shaken by your lucky escape, you move back warily East to the junction, to try the other direction. Turn to **130**.

175

The winged sandals glow again, and disappear. When you look up, you see that the face in the rock is fading also, and you are alone again in the small cave. You are disappointed, but there is nothing to do now but climb back down out of the cave, and back down the winding track to the junction where your turned off. Turn to **61**.

176

You examine the urn carefully, but it has no design on its plain earthenware surface, and it appears to be empty—though you cannot be sure, as its neck is narrow and the light is poor. You shake it hard—and it tumbles out of your hands to smash to pieces on the floor. Instantly, you feel a very unpleasant tingling sensation spark through your body, making you light-headed and weak. The urn was a good-luck charm, and you have brought bad luck on yourself by breaking it—lose one Dexterity and two Strength points. Will you now investigate the trapdoor? Turn to **98**? or leave under the archway? Turn to **70**.

177

You are shortly back at the T-junction. This time, will you go:

North?	Turn to **2**.
On West?	Turn to **192**.

178

Only two spells might be of use here. Will you try Vanish? Turn to **36**; or Freeze? Turn to **173**.

179

The battle over, you continue climbing East up into the foothills, and then down again. Soon it is hard to keep your feet as you descend into a deep chasm. You see a bridge swaying high above you, spanning the chasm from North to South as you begin climbing up the other side, and eventually you are on level ground again, as the sun sinks below the hills. You make a bed as best you can among the smooth rocks, and are soon asleep, your hand on your sword-hilt. Turn to **60**.

180

There is a long pole laid on the raft, and you use this to steady the awkward craft as you cast off. You find that you have to battle against quite a strong current as you punt over

to the opposite shore. However, you beach the raft safely, and drag it up across the shingle. Ahead, the sheer rock-face is honeycombed with cave-entrances, and again, you sense movement at several of them—turn to **154**.

181

Continuing South, you reach a T-junction. To your right is another torch-lit corridor, while to your left, the corridor fades into darkness in the distance. Will you go:

East? Turn to **119**.
West? Turn to **50**.

182

You walk back to the table in the centre of the room, and look around. There are doors in both the East and the West walls; walking over to the door in the West wall, you open it—ahead, the stone floor of the passage has dissolved into a bubbling-hot mass, giving off acrid fumes, and spitting sparks. There is no exit that way without a Quench Fire spell, which you no longer have, and so you go back and open the door in the East wall. A short corridor leads East to a junction. Turn to **135**.

183

The keys turn easily, and the gate swings open; you pass through, and walk across another courtyard. The sky is above you now, but ahead is a tall gate: a thick plank closes it to outsiders. More guardsmen walk across from the outside gate towards you: "Authorisation!" demands their captain. If you have a document of authorisation, turn to **7**. If you have not, turn to **51**.

184

The liquid is very refreshing. Add four Strength points, and turn to **199**.

185

Heading East, you draw your sword and prepare to fight, as you see a fierce-looking figure clad in leather armour approaching. Simultaneously, the figure you are facing does the same, and you laugh—you are facing your own reflection. You walk up to the mirror at the end of the corridor and reach out—but your hand passes straight through! Puzzled, you withdraw you hand and look again at your reflection. This mirror is insubstantial, it appears that you could walk straight through it. What will you do now?

Walk through the mirror? Turn to **114**.
Return West? Turn to **158**.

186

The tunnel slopes downwards quite sharply as you follow it round to the East, and quite soon ends at another junction. This time, will you go:

North? Turn to **197**.
South? Turn to **120**.

187

You look into a small room with a stone-flagged floor, quite bare except for a square table in the centre, on which rests a large bell-jar. A key hangs inside the jar, suspended by a thread, and there is some kind of marking on the key, though you cannot make out what. Will you:

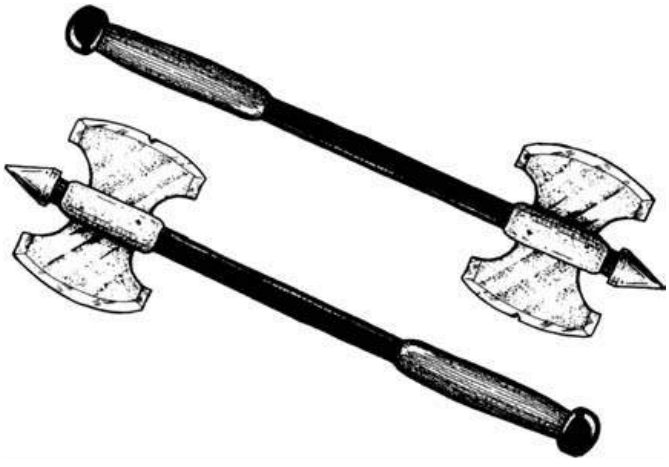
Lift the jar to get the key? Turn to **158**.
Leave at once? Turn to **181**.

188

Spluttering and in pain, you gasp out the words of the spell: and are at once able to breathe freely. However the acrid fumes still attack your skin and eyes, and you grab the key and dash out of the door again, shutting it tight behind you. Lose two Strength points. When you have recovered, you look more closely at the key: it is inscribed with the number, '33'. You pocket the key and continue North—turn to **134**.

189

You soon discover that you can't kill a corpse. Your sword-blade thuds sickeningly into its body, to no effect, and, as the corpse touches you, you feel the life draining from your body. Lose three Strength points. Ultimately, the corpse will drain the life from you unless you can dodge past it. The corpse has an effective Dexterity of 10, and you must throw for yourself and the creature. Each time you lose a round of fighting, you have been touched, and lose three more Strength points.



When you win a round, you have evaded its touch. After three successful rounds, turn to **156**. If you are not successful, the life will be drained from your body, and you too will join the ranks of the undead!

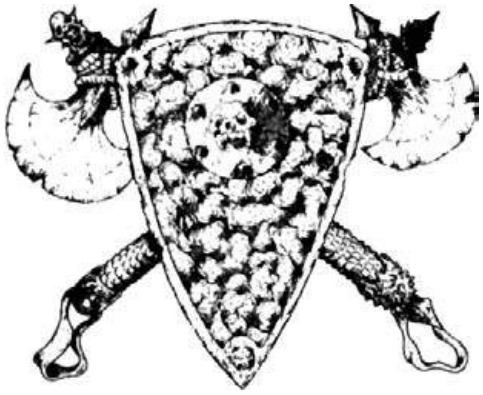
190

Backing away as the Bear closes, you gabble the magic words, but the Bear catches you a vicious blow with its long claws as you disappear—lose two Strength points. As the spell takes full effect, you are able to duck away and escape back North under the archway again. With the Bear's growls and roars receding behind you, you get back to the junction and swiftly go East as the spell wears off- turn to **117**.

191

The Bear lies dead on the ground, and for the first time, you notice that it has a small leather bag tied round its neck. You lean forward to look more closely, and see that one of the creature's long teeth is lying on the ground; pocketing this as a trophy, you tug away the soft leather bag: it rattles with a dull, metallic sound, and you open it and count out ten gold pieces. Returning them to the pouch, you place this in your pocket also, and look further around the gloomy room. Straw is scattered over the ground, and there is an urn in a corner. You move the straw carelessly with your sword tip, and notice a join in the stone floor: a little more exploration, and you clear the outline of a trapdoor in the floor. What will you do now:

Investigate the urn?	Turn to	**176**.
Investigate the trapdoor?	Turn to	**98**.
Ignore both, and return through the arch?	Turn to	**70**.



192

You soon reach the corridor from the North again, and so carry on West—turn to **38**.

193

The corridor East is a long one, and ends at a blank stone wall. As you examine the apparent dead-end, you spot a number sequence chipped into the stone, obviously by hand. You read, 1 8 27 64—216, and guess that if the blank space is filled in, something will happen. If you can work out what number should be in the blank space, turn to that section. Otherwise, you will have to return to the four-way junction—turn to **6**.

194

The way South soon turns to the East, and you make faster progress as the path climbs up out of the jungle, and into low foothills. However, you remain alert, and you instinctively draw your sword when there is a flurry of movement ahead.

Seconds later, there is a thundering of hooves as a massive beast, its flat head crowned by long spikes, careers towards you. You raise your shield and prepare to deal with the beast.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
SPIKEHEAD:	6	12

If you win, turn to **179**.

195

The keys fits easily into the keyhole and turns. You push gently at the wall, and the red section swings open; you pass through, into a corner—a corridor leads away from you to the East, and another to the South. Will you go:

East? Turn to **11**.
South? Turn to **87**.

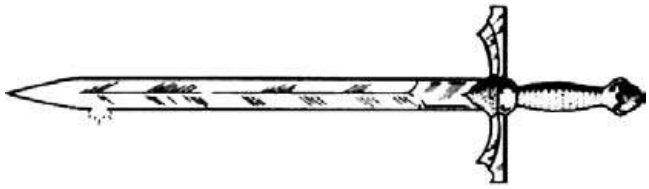
196

	Dexterity	*Strength*
BEAR:	8	12

If you win, turn to **191**.

197

You begin climbing up again, and the tunnel narrows and becomes lower, until you have to crawl along on all-fours. It soon bends round to the East, and you can see a different kind of light ahead. A few moments later, your head and shoulders emerge from an entrance in sheer rock, plunging down to a fast-flowing underground river, some fifty feet below. Directly opposite is a similar rock-face, and since there seems to be no obvious way to get any further, you return West and South, past the tunnel on your right that you first came down and on South—turn to **120**.



198

Soon you are on the bank of a rushing underground river, flowing rapidly away to the South-West. A rope is stretched across to the other bank, and you stop to take stock. You realise that you cannot go back, as the Breathe spell has worn off by now, so it seems you must negotiate this river. Will you:

Try to swim? Turn to **110**.
Try crossing by means of the rope? Turn to **46**.

199

Passing under the archway, you discover that the corridor North soon turns to the East, where it ends at another door. The door opens when you push it, and you see a sight to gladden your eyes—a table is laid, creaking under the weight of meat, cheeses, bread and wine. Putting your sword away, you are about to fall on this feast when a blow from behind knocks you sprawling to the ground—lose one Strength point. You are facing a huge, bat-like creature, with fierce talons and teeth like dagger-blades; in a moment, you are on your feet again, sword drawn, as the Hellbat swoops.

	Dexterity	*Strength*
HELLBAT:	9	10

If you win, turn to **58**.

200

Miraculously, several guards heave away the thick plank that bars the outside gate. Your stomach heaving, you walk through and out into the fresh air and alien landscape. The oddly-formed rocks are comforting now as you clamber across them, alert this time for any sign of movement. At last, as the pale sun goes down, castle Scarpathia is well behind you: you make a bed as best you can for the night, the castle standing out behind you, stark against the evening sky. As fast as you can, you will return to Iquitos and warn him of the impending danger: the plans of Margas and Volth seem to be well-advanced, and you realise that the responsibility for many lives rests on your shoulders. However, you are determined—you will reach Iquitos in time, and warn him of the threat to his peaceful city-state: you have already survived perils that would have defeated a lesser mortal—you will not be beaten now!

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MESSAGES FROM BEYOND

Dear *PROTEUS,*

Hello, it is I, Grotowart the Druid, writing to you from Bogrot, after just completing Issue 12 which I must say was a truly good adventure.

Only the key puzzle was a little hard, wasn't it? Fortunately, being a Druid, I have an Honours degree in cheating, so I managed to solve it. And you are probably wondering how come I've only just completed issue 12. But this is not why I'm writing to you.

Firstly, I have 10 issues of *PROTEUS* and have discovered the adventures are either excellent (Nos 4 & 12) or darn right rubbish (Nos 2 & 13), although *PROTEUS* is very good value for money. Secondly, the art is either excellent (namely Mark Dunn and Gary Harrod) or terrible (mentioning no names). But all of your posters have been great.

I have found the mapping almost impossible—it's like trying to draw varicose veins. Can't the writer be more specific about the distance the player walks to give a rough estimate of how long to draw the paths.

Last but not least—how about giving us some kind of competitions, eh? Us Druids need competitions to keep our brains warm.

If you don't print this letter, I'm going to turn Mike Kenward into a Hobbit and set fire to his toe-nails.

Grotowart the Druis (alias
Martin Egginton),
Johannesburg,
South Africa.

Do you promise to carry out your last threat? (Oh dear, fired again.)

Dear *PROTEUS,*

I'm a 22-year-old headbanger who discovered *PROTEUS* by chance. 'Twas whilst I was in ye olde newsagents that I did see Issue 11 "Challenge of the Promethian Guild".

Gadzooks! thought I, this doth look to be a top notch publication. So I forked out my last few groats and the rest, as they say, is history. As I have never succeeded in any of the challenges set, but I have fun trying.

If, as seems the case, people want the answers to each magazine and you are reluctant to publish them for fear of spoiling it for others, why don't you adopt my idea? Keep a master copy of the answers and if any player sends you relevant postage costs, etc., you can run off a photocopy and send it back to them.

I hope you decide to print my letter.

S. Porter,
Borrowash,
Derby.

Interesting point, Mr. Porter—how do other readers feel? As regards your poor success rate with our challenges—we think thou doth not try hard enough!

Dear *PROTEUS,*

Eat your heart out Steve Jackson and Ian Livingstone. Who wants to buy their books when you can get more value for money with *PROTEUS?* How can C.S. Lewis comment on *The Lord of the Rings*? Tolkein is the greatest ever fantasy writer (as you can see, I'm another Tolkien fan).

I like writing and am in the process of writing a fantasy novel myself. I am not too keen on the sci-fi in Issue 11, but otherwise keep up the good work!

If you don't print my letter and drawing I will have Gandolf turn you into a Gollum!

Andrew Wigley,
Shrewsbury,
Shropshire

You understand, of course, that we make it a policy on PROTEUS *to never be influenced by blackmail with regard to which letters we print.*

Dear *PROTEUS,*

HI! I'm an Australian who has only recently discovered your magazine and I am very pleased with it. I am an avid AD & D player —but what do you do when nobody else is available to play?

I have always enjoyed fantasy and sci-fi etc., my favourite being Michael Moorcock. I am 23 and enjoy *PROTEUS* because I find it is one of the few solo game magazines that I don't feel is too young for me. I would like to say a few things (mainly in connection with some letters in issue 13).

Please have the distances in your adventures—it would make map drawing and comprehension so much easier. Also I think it would be a good idea to print the map from the previous adventure—but don't forsake the poster for this! Extra adventure sheets would be terrific and finally, I don't mind sci-fi, so think it a good idea to slip in a few adventures of that sort once in a while.

Keep up the good work and keep the adventures flowing.

Sandra Harman,
Margate,
Australia.

Thanks for your comments Sandra, and we're comforted to know we're not too young for you (especially as the average age of each member of staff runs into three figures!).

Dear *PROTEUS,*

After battling my way through a great number of bloodthirsty Orcs and slaughtering many foul Goblins, I finally reached my goal. Through magical elfin forests and great dingy dungeons, until I found it…my long lost pen.

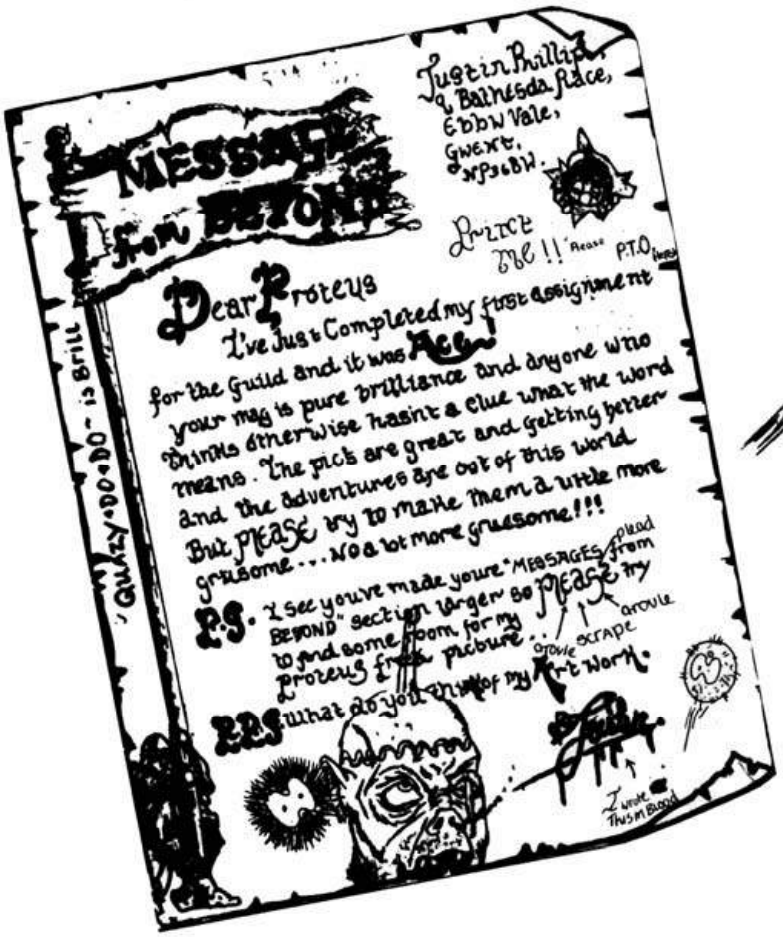
Yes, a pen to write a letter to the sacred sanctuary where the greatest adventure game parchments are made—yes, the great castle of *PROTEUS.*

Now you are reading this letter congratulating the scribes of the great castle in deepest Dorset, on producing adventures that would even baffle the most powerful and wise sorcerers of our time. I would now like to curse a certain M. Hill (Issue 13) who reckons the *Warlock* adventures were so good compared to *PROTEUS.* Well, all I've got to say is at least *PROTEUS* can keep going after 13 issues!

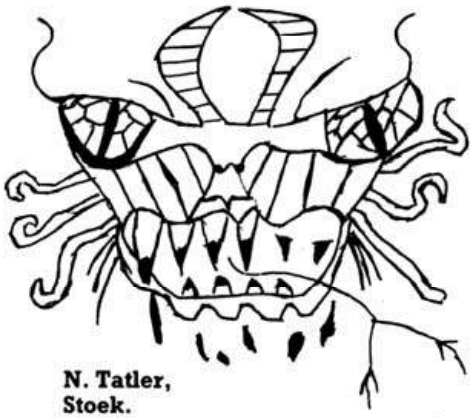
Beware. Mr. Hill, you may be getting visitors from the highest Council of Elves soon, to slay you and your crummy *Warlock* dribble.

Criznaq Goblin Cleaver,
Dorchester,
Dorset.

We're amazed that someone with your mystical and magical talents has to resort to a mere pen to write to us. We're not complaining—those we receive scribed it blood do tend to fade quickly.

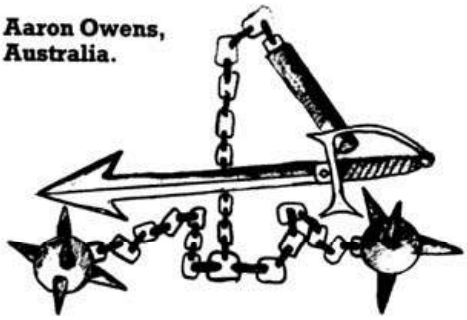

MESSAGES from BEYOND
Justin Phillips
9 Balnesda Place,
Ebbw Vale,
Gwent.
NP3 6BW.
Please Me!!
P.T.O.
Dear Proteus
I've just Completed my first assignment
for the guild and it was Ace!
your mag is pure brilliance and anyone who
thinks otherwise hasn't a clue what the word
means. The pics are great and getting better
and the adventures are out of this world
But please try to make them a little more
gruesome...Wod a lot more gruesome!!!
P.S. I see you've made your "MESSAGES from
BEYOND" section larger so please try
to find some room for my
Proteus freak picture.
groove
groove
scrape
P.P.S. What do you think of my Art Work.
I wrote this in Blood

Letter and artwork from Justin Phillips, Gwent.



N. Tatler, Stoek.

Aaron Owens, Australia.



Ali Aziz, Hackney, London.

Right: Lee 'Goblin Slayer' Piper, Plymouth, Devon.

Rogue's Gallery

At last! A 'rogue's gallery' of monsters, weaponry and various other gruesome freaks of fantasy as drawn by PROTEUS readers. Keep sending them in – you may well see your artistic efforts in print next time!

Please note: You will have more chance of seeing your work published if you only submit artwork drawn in ink, on plain white paper.

Dear PROTEUS,

To add fuel to the already rampantly raging *sci-fi v fantasy* argument, I should like to say that fantasy can include the term science fiction as neither is really set in a world that we can identify very closely with.

Indeed, there are many novels particularly by Michael Moorcock that are called ***science fantasy***. This is not to say the *PROTEUS* should become a sci-fi magazine, but I think a fair amount of space should be given to each side of the fantasy coin.

PROTEUS should at least devote every other issue to sci-fi for a year as an experiment. After all, you never get anywhere if you do not try to go beyond what you have done before. A notable example of experimentation with sci-fi is the new *WARHAMMER 40,000* wargame which is using the basic fantasy rules for *WARHAMMER* for a sci-fi game. Also, a number of the FF books have touched on the sci-fi side.

I think that the only real objection to having sci-fi is the old-fashioned bigotry that has been levelled at science fiction since the days of the pulp magazines of the 1930s. Fantasy is fun, but too much is cloying; a sharp burst of sci-fi every so often would make a welcome change.

Yours fantasysingly,
Matthew Dalby.

Thank you for your points, Matthew, wherever you are. As you did not enclose your address, we wonder if you really do exist or are simply a figure of our imagination.

Rogue's Gallery

More examples of your impressive artwork. We look forward to receiving more!

Brendan Phoenix, Manchester.

Simon Godsell, Derbyshire.

'Argoth the Equaliser', Dartford, Kent.

'Vazeel' and 'Sword Slasher' by Martin Egginton, Johannesburg, South Africa.

I am 12 years old and would love a pen pal between 11 and 13 who likes *Proteus* and *Fighting Fantasy*.
Stephen Schulz,
[redacted]
Inverness, Scotland.

I am 12 years of age and I am looking for a male pen pal between 11 and 13. I like Tolkien. Anyone like me out there? If so, write to,
Andrew Wigley,
[redacted]
Nr. Shrewsbury,
Shropshire.

I'm 12 and I would like a D&D playing pal.
Nic Wise,
[redacted]
Birmingham,
West Midlands [redacted].

Agile warrior who specialises in petty magic seeks female who likes adventure books.
Gary White,
[redacted]
St. Neots,
Cambs.[redacted]

Penpal please, boy or girl, 10-13 years old. Interested in Commodore games and solo and games mastered adventures.
Ian Hewitt,
[redacted]
Boston,
Lincs[redacted]

I am 11 years old wanting a male questor, 11-14, interested in *Proteus*, FF, D&D, AD&D etc., etc. I have issues 2 & 3 FREE to give to my first reply (If I get any!)
Devil's Domain,
[redacted]
Stoke on Trent,
Staffa.[redacted]

Hi! I am Ali and I am 17. A Unique Warrior! I would like letters from other adventurers.
Ali Aziz,
[redacted]
Hackney, London[redacted].

10 year old Australian would like to contact British (or any other nationality) D&D player to play an adventure or two.
Tom Barbalet,
[redacted]
Deakin[redacted], Australia[redacted].

Dear PROTEUS,

I love gamebooks and role-playing games. The only problem is my mum won't let me buy them! She says that they are too realistic! Now she won't even let me buy your mag! Please print this letter as my mum might change her mind if she sees it.

Daniel Ridgeway,
Deal,
Kent.

Come on Mum, play the game! In fact that's a good idea, Daniel—then once you Mum's hooked on PROTEUS you can borrow her copies!

Dear PROTEUS,

I was not too pleased when I read what the story was in Issue 15. For a Bumper Issue, one would expect three *different* stories and not a repeat of Issue 6. I grant you "In Search of Christmas" did look fun, but if I wanted to repeat my adventure in "The Fortress of Kruglach" I could have picked up my own copy. From your own sales, it was obvious that most readers had this issue.

I do have some praise for PROTEUS. I enjoy the adventures very much and like the artwork extremely. Is there any chance of an issue being published with only artwork in it? (Colour, of course!) I'm sure many readers would like to see something of this kind.

Norma McIntosh (Aged 18),
Dundee.

The decision to reprint Issue 6 in our bumper Christmas package was due to an overwhelming number of requests for that particular back number. As the original is now out of print, it gave readers who missed the adventure first time round an opportunity to buy "The Fortress of Kruglach".

As for publishing an issue containing only artwork, isn't this rather defeating the original reason for producing a magazine such as PROTEUS?

Dear PROTEUS,

Yes, you've guessed it, another crazy fantasy freak writing in to say how wonderful your mag is. The stories are fantastic and the artwork is ACE so ignore a certain person called Kevin Cleary who asks for smaller artwork. If you are willing to make the adventures longer (which I'm sure you would) more pages is the answer.

The idea of geo-secular powers and low-order powers in "Shinderg's Tomb" (No. 3) by Richard Barron, was really good. More please! Nigel Dodds made a good point in Issue 13 about mazes which are a load or rubbish!!

All artists are excellent although some seem to have disappeared from the issues—has your pet hobgoblin got them? Anyway good luck with the mag and well done!

John Paul Herring (Alias Fantasy Freak),
Salford.

Yep! That hobgoblin has a lot to answer for (by the way—where's the Editor?).

MERKIN
I HAVE TO TRAVEL THROUGH GLOOMSMOULD FOREST & I NEED SOMETHING TO PROTECT ME FROM TROLLS
FLAN
TAKE THIS AMULET, IT IS BLESSED WITH THE POWER OF THE ANCIENTS
REALLY EFFECTIVE ANTI-TROLL KIT
IF A TROLL APPROACHES HOLD IT HIGH & SAY I COMMAND YOU BY THE POWERS OF THE LEY TO BEGONE!
& IF HE WON'T GO AWAY THREATEN TO PLAY THIS MAX BYGRAVES RECORD TO HIM
DROWNALONGAMAX

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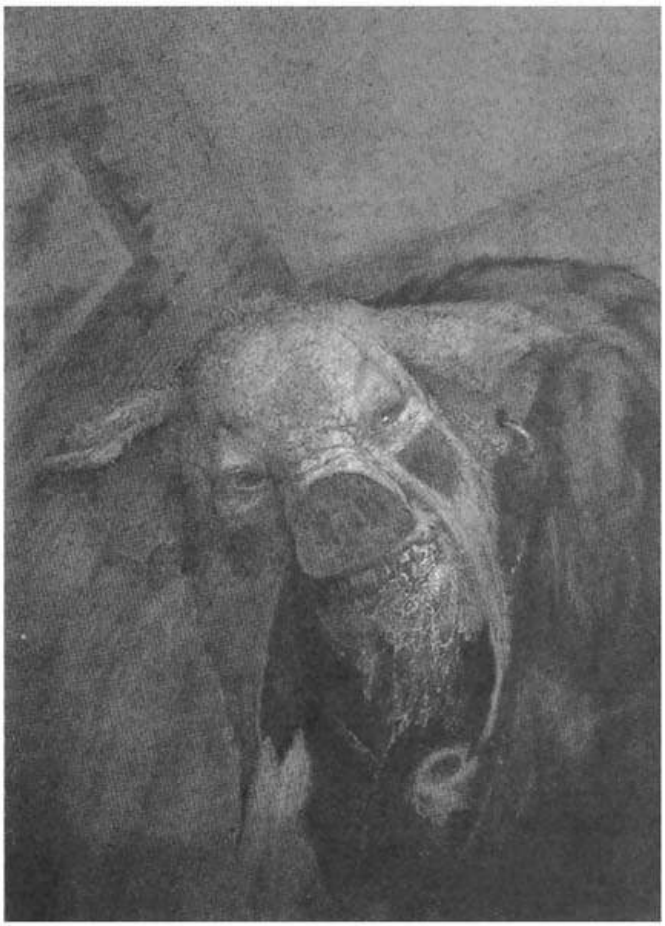


More

PROTEUS PERILS TO BRAVE

On sale Friday February 19

LONDON TO SYDNEY IN

THREE HOURS

Hermes, HOTOL, NASP and a possible Soviet Shuttle? You have probably read all about them in the news recently – we take a look at what the future may hold without getting involved in the politics. A day trip to Australia!

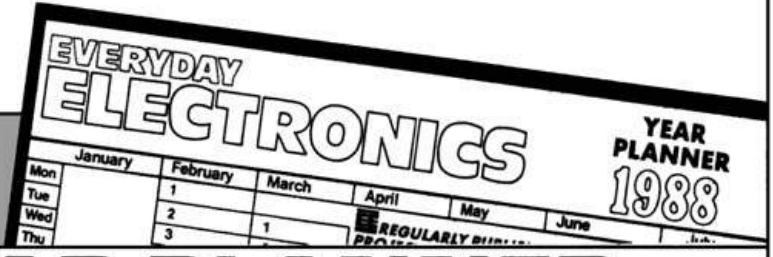
ONE VALVE RECEIVER

Ever felt like a change from anonymous plastic packages and printed circuit boards? Fancy a radio with a nice warm glowing valve on a metal case – something that you can "see" is working? Then this project is for you.

EMERGENCY LIGHT UNIT

Just the job for winter power cuts, this project will provide up to 12 hours of automatically controlled light in the event of mains failure. Two different versions are described, each providing emergency lighting from rechargeable cells.

FREE! with every issue



1988 YEAR PLANNER

EVERYDAY ELECTRONICS

MARCH ISSUE ON SALE FRIDAY FEBRUARY 5TH

BACK NUMBERS

Back issues from 2 to 4, and 7 to 15 are available from Proteus, Wimborne Publishing Ltd., 6 Church St., Wimborne, Dorset BH21 1JH. Just send a cheque, P.O. or bank draft (in £ sterling) payable to Proteus with your name and address and state which issues you require.

Copies cost £1.25 each including postage (£1.75 overseas, surface mail). Sorry, No. 1, No. 5 and No. 6 are now sold out.

BINDERS

High quality deep red vellum covered binders are now available to hold six issues of Proteus. Each binder contains six nylon fixings which will each retain an issue without damaging it and allow its removal at any time.

The binder has PROTEUS embossed on the spine in gold lettering. Keep your issues in pristine condition for just £3.95 plus 50p postage (£2.50 postage for overseas readers). Just send a cheque, P.O. or bank draft (in £ sterling only), together with your name and address to Proteus, Wimborne Publishing Ltd., 6 Church St., Wimborne, Dorset BH21 1JH.

QUAZI·DO·DO
7·30 AM · BRFAKEAST AT FORTRESS VOIDINESS
OH NO!
"WHAT AILS YOU OH SLIMYNESS"
IT'S THAT PSYCHOTIC PAPER BOY!
SHALL I DESTROY HIM WITH THIS BOAR'S BLADDER?
BOING!
"NO, NO JUST TELL HIM TO BE CAREFUL WITH MY SUNDAY SUPPLEMENT
BOING!
BOING!
BOING!
GRRRR!
AT ONCE YOUR EMINENCE!
"TOO LATE..!!
HEE!
HEE!
HEE!
SUNDAY SUPPLEMENT
KILROY
TOXIC!
© STORY: IAN DOCKERILL ART: MARK X BURN ⓩ

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PROTEUS

High quality, long-sleeved, white poly-cotton sweatshirts. Machine washable. Printed with exclusive *Proteus* artwork

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